

STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2018

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 2:34 p.m., in room SD-192, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Lindsey Graham (Chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Graham, Lankford, Daines, Hyde-Smith, Leahy, Durbin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, and Van Hollen.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE POMPEO, SECRETARY

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM

Senator GRAHAM. The subcommittee will come to order. We are pleased to have the Secretary of State, Mr. Pompeo, with us.

You've got to leave at 4:30. I know you've got a hard stop. We're going to accommodate that. We're going to run the train on time and have 6-minute rounds, and I'll give a very short opening statement.

Number one, I'm pleased that you were chosen by the President, and I think you're the right person at the right time. You understand the world for what it is, a complicated place, and being a former CIA director, you understand the threats. You have the President's confidence. You certainly have my confidence, and I appreciate that you and your family are willing to do this. We will not pay you by the mile, because I don't think we could afford it.

So let's talk a little bit about this account. Then we'll get into the questioning. Senator Leahy and I have been doing this for quite a while, and foreign assistance is sometimes difficult to sell domestically, but if you don't want to be in endless wars, if you want to have more tools than just dropping bombs, it's essential we have a robust foreign assistance account. It's essential that our diplomats under your command serve safely.

And to the public: I often talk about the military, because they deserve it. I don't talk enough about the State Department and USAID members, who serve in very dangerous locations without the security footprint sometimes that we would like. They take

risks on behalf of this Nation every day, and they're very much heroes. I think you will be a good voice for their needs.

Now, as to the President's budget request, it is 20-something percent below what we wind up doing, and, because we have time constraints, these are the threats we face, non-state actor challenges and state actor challenges really since 2011, when we implemented sequestration. Everything on that chart is in your purview, North Korea being one of the easier challenges you face. So North Korea, Iran, and ISIS is a pretty good challenge. Then you just keep going to Syria, Yemen, and Russia—on and on and on. And here's what we're trying to prevent: proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. You're an essential part of all this.

I just don't see how it makes sense to cut the budget over 20 percent, given your portfolio, and I'll ask you one quick question in a minute: If we give you more money, do you think you can wisely spend it? And you will say yes, and if you don't, we're going to have a problem.

So having said that, I want to turn it over to Senator Leahy.

I really appreciate you coming today, Mike, because you're in demand. But this subcommittee needs to tell you what's on our mind, and you need to tell us what we can do to help you better do your job.

Senator Leahy.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR PATRICK J. LEAHY

Senator LEAHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Secretary Pompeo, thank you for being here. Welcome. You are no stranger to the Congress, and I am sure you know this subcommittee has had long bipartisan support for the State Department, regardless of whether Republicans or Democrats have been in charge of the Senate, or whether it has been a Republican administration or a Democrat administration. Senator Graham and I have swapped seats on this subcommittee over the years, and we've always worked together.

Last week, the committee unanimously reported the fiscal year 2019 State, Foreign Operations bill. We rejected the cuts proposed by OMB. Our goal was to enable the United States to remain the global leader that so many Americans and people around the world want us to be. That means we have to lead by example. We have to stand up for our values and our principles. We have to pay our fair share to support international organizations and alliances that protect our interests, and support policies and programs that enhance our reputation and our credibility.

I am going to put my whole statement in the record, but I'll close with this. I think we have two choices. One is to cut the budget for the State Department and USAID by 25 percent, slash our contributions to the United Nations, withdraw from international agreements and treaties, embrace corrupt despots who trample the rights of citizens, close our borders to people fleeing violence and war, bully our neighbors, and ignore the fact that our strongest competitors are methodically expanding their influence as we pull back.

The other approach is to be a leader, one that is still the world's only superpower, thanks to the sacrifice of generations of Ameri-

cans who came before us. That is the approach this subcommittee has taken, and the lion's share of the credit goes to Chairman Graham, because he committed at the beginning, and we did it together. We agreed to make the bill bipartisan, and we tried to have an unanimous vote, and we did.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR PATRICK J. LEAHY

We live in a rapidly changing, dangerous world. I doubt there are any among us who would have predicted, when the Berlin Wall came down 30 years ago, that the world would look the way it does today:

- Two seemingly unending American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq;
- Religious and ethnic violent extremism that has grown steadily worse since 9/11;
- Global pandemics that have infected and caused the deaths of tens of millions of people;
- Rising temperatures and water scarcity threatening whole regions;
- The proliferation of ever more powerful nuclear weapons;
- Increasing authoritarianism and the dismantling of democratic institutions; and
- Humanitarian crises and people fleeing their homes on a scale not seen since World War II.

You are here to defend the President's budget, and we understand that. So it could be said that we are here to try to save you from your own administration, and to protect the funding for diplomacy and development. We want the people at the State Department and USAID to have the resources they need to do their jobs.

This budget amounts to a tiny fraction of the Federal budget, and it compliments the role of our military by building more stable societies to prevent conflict, and by rebuilding after conflicts and other disasters when they occur. We want other countries to contribute more, but we cannot protect our interests by doing less.

I expect most of the discussion today will focus on topics in the news, like North Korea, Iran, China, Iraq and Syria. There's nothing wrong with that. But let's remember that we can have the best trained people and the best policies and the best programs, but without the funds to implement them there won't be much to show for it.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. We like ourselves if nobody else does.

[Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. So the floor is yours, Mr. Secretary.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE POMPEO

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Leahy. I appreciate you having me here today. I look forward to our conversation.

Distinguished Members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to talk today about the President's budget and the issues that are on your mind. The list that you show there, Senator Graham, is long, and I could probably add a couple of others. I'm sure you could add a couple of more as well.

I want you to know, too, how much I appreciate the fact that you all have operated in a bipartisan manner. I've had a chance to talk to many of you on the phone. We've had productive conversations over a wide range of topics. Know that I'm always available to listen and make sure I understand your priorities and the way you are thinking about the world. It is helpful to me. It's not just something I do as a courtesy, but something that I value extraordinarily. You all were very short with your opening statements. I will do the same.

You should see that the overall proposed budget reflects an effort to manage dollars wisely. We've already made substantial progress in working on next year's budget. I look forward to each of us and our teams continuing to work to achieve America's foreign policy objectives.

With that, I have a written statement, and I've submitted it. I'm happy to close there and take questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL POMPEO

Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Leahy, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee:

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the administration's fiscal year 2019 budget request for the State Department and USAID, recognizing that the Committee has already done great work to advance an fiscal year 2019 appropriations bill for our organizations. I look forward to continuing a dialogue with the Committee as the appropriations process moves forward. And I call your attention to the administration's communications on the bill and the need to exercise fiscal responsibility, as is called for in the President's fiscal year 2019 budget.

Last December the Trump administration released the National Security Strategy. The four pillars of the strategy are protecting the American people, the homeland, and our way of life; promoting American prosperity; preserving peace through strength; and advancing American influence.

In order to achieve these national security objectives, the administration has submitted our fiscal year 2019 budget request of \$39.3 billion for the State Department and USAID. The proposed request reflects our obligation to use taxpayer dollars wisely and effectively.

Our request also makes clear the United States' financial commitment to the pursuit of shared goals must be met proportionally by the international community. It is time for other nations—especially those with high GDP—to assume greater responsibilities and devote greater resources toward common objectives, whether it's crushing terrorists, stopping Iran's malign behavior, strengthening the NATO alliance, eradicating infectious diseases, and so much more. We expect greater burden sharing for our allies and partners.

The President is committed to diplomacy as the primary means of achieving the United States' foreign policy objectives, which are further detailed in our State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan. We will use every dollar to deliver on our duty to serve the American people and the enduring foreign policy victories that are within sight.

On North Korea, the maximum pressure campaign of diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions undertaken at the beginning of 2017 has produced results in the form of the historic Summit which took place on June 12. Our goals for the Summit were to establish a relationship between President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un and obtain a public commitment from North Korea to denuclearization. Those objectives were achieved. We expect to have follow-up meetings with North Korea soon to identify specific ways to achieve the goals outlined in the Joint Statement. Sanctions will remain in place until the final, fully-verified denuclearization of North Korea as agreed to by Chairman Kim occurs. We know this will not be an easy or quick process, but we believe we can write a new chapter in our relationship with North Korea if Kim Jong Un takes the right steps.

Last month I unveiled a new direction for the President's Iran strategy. We will apply financial pressure, coordinate with our DoD colleagues on deterrence efforts, support the Iranian people who seek a brighter future, and hold out the prospect of a new deal for Iran—if it changes its behavior. We seek to work with as many partners, friends, and allies as possible to achieve the common objective of stopping all of Iran's nuclear and non-nuclear threats.

We've made outstanding progress against ISIS, but the job isn't done yet. The progress against ISIS has been predominantly accomplished through military action. But there is a very important role for diplomacy and assistance in ensuring the permanent defeat of ISIS. We must continue robust stabilization activities with our Coalition partners in order to prevent ISIS from resurfacing. We are also countering ISIS's attempts to gain safe havens in areas such as Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Africa. In addition to providing targeted security sector assistance funding, we are working with our allies and partners to stop foreign fighter travel, cut off sources of revenue, combat ISIS online, share intelligence, and prosecute those who come off the battlefield.

We know Russia poses a challenge to our strategic interests and the security of ourselves and our allies. This is evident from the chemical weapons attack in the UK, for which we imposed consequences in concert with several partners and allies. We've been clear with Russia that it must honor its commitments under the Minsk agreements and end its occupation of Crimea if peace is to prevail in Ukraine. As a guarantor of the Assad regime, Russia has a responsibility to be a constructive actor for stability and peace in Syria, which includes stopping the regime's use of chemical weapons. We are holding Russia accountable to its commitment to the Geneva process.

China is a rising strategic competitor. We must work constructively with a nation of China's importance on issues such as North Korea and opioids, but we cannot sacrifice the interests of the American people and our economic competitiveness, tolerate aggression in the South China Sea and elsewhere, or passively watch as American intellectual property is stolen. We are making clear to China that the protection of human rights is integral to any country that wishes to be regarded as a great nation. Elsewhere in Asia, we are re-affirming and expanding partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region with nations that share our commitment to security, economic freedom, sovereignty, and liberty.

Turkey is a key NATO Ally and critical partner in the Coalition to Defeat ISIS. It is in our interest to maintain Turkey's Western orientation. We have made clear to Turkey the very real and very negative consequences of acquiring the Russian S-400 system, including its potential impact on Turkey's participation in the F-35 program. I appreciate Congress's strong interest in this issue, and I look forward to consulting with you as we pursue these issues with the Government of Turkey.

Finally, in our own hemisphere, we are embracing the "Year of the Americas," by re-affirming our commitment to longstanding partnerships grounded in shared interests and values. On Venezuela, we have imposed new economic and diplomatic pressure on the Maduro regime to help steer that country back toward democracy, and we are rallying like-minded regional partners to do the same.

Across the world, we have encouraged nations to assume greater responsibilities for maintaining their own and our shared security and stability. In the face of a resurgent Russia, and in response to our urging, many NATO members are newly meeting their commitments to funding deterrence and defense initiatives. President Trump's call to the leaders of Middle East countries in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, rallied leaders of those nations to more aggressively combat terrorism inside their own borders and to counter violent extremism abroad.

And as part of the new South Asia strategy, we have been clear with Pakistan that ensuring reconciliation, peace, and security in Afghanistan in large part depends on Pakistan's willingness to crack down on terrorist safe havens and instigators of terrorist activity in its own country.

Our highest priority is keeping the American people safe. The fiscal year 2019 budget request for \$7.3 billion in security assistance will help protect Americans at home and overseas. The State Department will continue to lead international efforts to denuclearize North Korea, and to prevent Iran and other actors from unlawfully acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, while strengthening the capacity of partner nations to support our efforts as well.

This budget request calls for \$5.7 billion in support for Coalition efforts to defeat ISIS and counter other transnational terrorist and criminal groups that threaten the American homeland. The State Department and USAID will sustain programs that address the conditions that give rise to these threats, including poor governance, weak institutions, lack of economic opportunity, corruption, and persistent human rights abuses, and attract additional donor nations' support for these efforts.

Last week in Detroit, I reaffirmed that America's prosperity and national security depend on a strong and growing American economy. Economic diplomacy will remain an essential mission of the State Department. This budget request seeks \$2.2 billion for economic growth activities like attracting investment in the United States, expanding markets for U.S. exports, and ensuring a level playing field internationally for American businesses and American workers.

This budget request includes an important proposal for a new standalone development finance institution (DFI) broadly consistent with S. 2463, the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018 (BUILD Act of 2018), being considered by the Foreign Relations Committee. Like the BUILD Act, the administration proposal consolidates existing functions now spread across various agencies to improve efficiencies and better mobilize private sector resources.

If authorized by Congress, a DFI with strong linkages to State and USAID will advance U.S. national security and development objectives by deploying reformed and modernized development finance tools that support, not displace, the private sector. The administration shares the goals of the cosponsors to foster sustainable

development in developing countries and provide strong alternatives to state-directed initiatives.

With the consolidation of these functions in the DFI we would have both the opportunity for greater impact and the responsibility to work together as a government to advance development outcomes, promote self-reliance among partner countries, and advance U.S. interests and values. To this end, the budget requests \$56 million to collaborate and coordinate programming with the DFI and leverage its tools.

Americans benefit from sustained engagement with the rest of the world that serves our interests and those of our allies. This budget upholds our commitments to our allies, including \$3.3 billion in support of the recent, 10-year Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Israel regarding U.S. military assistance, a 6.5 percent increase from last year's request. In recognition of our critical strategic partnership and new 5-year Memorandum of Understanding with Jordan, the budget also strengthens our high level of support by requesting \$1.275 billion for Jordan in fiscal year 2019.

In light of continuing significant humanitarian needs, largely driven by ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere, the fiscal year 2019 request includes \$6.4 billion for humanitarian assistance, an increase of \$1.1 billion, or 21 percent, from the fiscal year 2018 request. We will use these resources strategically as part of a new approach to relief in the near term to boost burden sharing by other donors, improve U.S. Government internal humanitarian assistance coordination, and catalyze reforms and efficiencies at the U.N. and with other partners. Additionally, the administration is developing a proposal to reorganize how humanitarian assistance is provided across State and USAID to maximize our capacity to drive strong U.N. humanitarian system reform, increase global burden-sharing, minimize duplication of effort in our programming and policy, and maximize efficiency in meeting humanitarian needs and resolving underlying crises. The ultimate objective is to maximize the impact of hard-earned U.S. tax dollars and deliver the best outcome for those dollars.

The President's budget continues global health funding at a level that will support our work and our leadership in this area, including through flagship programs like PEPFAR and the President's Malaria Initiative.

We continue our support for these assistance programs because we know they are a projection of American leadership and they contribute to economic growth, and social and political stability. They are not only measures of the values of the American people, but they contribute to our interests.

As we have seen with outbreaks of Ebola and other diseases in the past few years, these health programs have provided a foundation to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases of epidemic potential, which helps protect the American people.

American values must be communicated to the world at all times. The fiscal year 2019 budget request further defends and advances America's values by devoting \$565 million to public diplomacy programs. These programs are essential to informing public opinion abroad and communicating American values like respect for human rights and the rule of law. The people of the world must know not only the policies, but also the principles for which the United States stands. Even as our public diplomacy budget calls for greater burden-sharing of long-standing programs, the \$55.4 million requested for the Global Engagement Center covers both its original counter-extremist mission, plus an increase of \$20 million to counter state-sponsored disinformation campaigns. We will not tolerate Russian interference in the 2018 elections, and we will continue to take action to prevent it.

Finally, I would like to update you on what is happening inside the Department. The Department's workforce is our most valuable asset. Since becoming Secretary, one of my highest priorities has been ensuring that the finest foreign affairs professionals in the world are fully prepared and empowered to achieve our mission. I am unleashing our teams to do what they do best on behalf of the American people.

In my first 2 months, I've held a town hall for all staff and regular "Meetings with Mike" to listen to their expertise and answer their questions. I am committed to working as one team with all our personnel.

With so many challenges before us, the State Department needs a full team on the field, from locally employed staff around the world to senior leaders in Washington. That's why I lifted the Eligible Family Member hiring freeze as one of my first acts as Secretary, and also lifted the hiring freeze for all Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel. All Foreign Service and Civil Service hiring will be consistent with the funding levels that Congress recently enacted.

Additionally, I know that our career professionals work best when the goals are clear and the leadership team is at full strength. I have devoted a great deal of time

to filling vacancies at the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Ambassador levels.

We need our men and women on the ground, executing American diplomacy with great vigor and energy, and representing our great nation. We need the best tools as well: this budget would also invest \$150 million for IT modernization. We need to work at the speed of 21st century diplomacy.

As I have said many times, my great goal is to restore the trademark State Department swagger that has been instrumental in advancing American security, prosperity, and liberty for centuries. I define swagger this way: we must be everywhere with the best ideas and solutions. We must create value during the policy formation process. We must outwork and out-hustle others. We must be aggressive in working with our allies and ferocious in defending American values against our adversaries.

Today I ask for your support to ensure that our diplomatic, development and organizational initiatives are successful for the State Department and USAID, and, most importantly, for the American people.

Thank you for your time. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary. We'll do 6-minute rounds and just get on with it.

AFGHANISTAN

Let's start with Afghanistan. Do you know General Miller?

Secretary POMPEO. I do know General Miller.

Senator GRAHAM. I asked him point blank what would happen if we withdrew in the next 6 months in Afghanistan. He said he thinks it would lead to a lot of disorder and chaos. Then I asked him, "Do you think it would be any different than Iraq when we left too soon?" "Senator, from my point of view, I think it would be similar." "What are the concerns?" "I would be concerned about ISIS and Al Qaeda's ability to merge and project external operations because I know they want to, and I know they're consistently looking for that opportunity."

Do you agree with that assessment of Afghanistan?

Secretary POMPEO. I do.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you agree with me that if we left without conditions-based withdrawal that you could not do much without security in terms of the State Department and USAID? Your people would be sitting ducks.

Secretary POMPEO. I do.

Secretary GRAHAM. So I just want you to convey that to the President, that we will keep the aid coming to Afghanistan, make sure it's metrics-based, make sure we don't waste our money. But I just don't see how the State Department can operate if the security environment doesn't exist, and if we withdraw too soon, it will fall apart, and that's just the way the world is.

NORTH KOREA

In terms of North Korea, if we're able to achieve an agreement with North Korea, do you believe it would be wise to send it to the Congress?

Secretary POMPEO. I do.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Schumer and Leahy and several other Democratic colleagues sent you a letter about what a good deal would look like with North Korea: First, any agreement with North Korea must be built on the current nuclear test suspension and ultimately include the dismantlement and removal of all nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons from North Korea. Second, our

goal must be the full, complete, and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea. Third, North Korea must continue its current ballistic missile test suspension, including any space launch, ultimately dismantling their program, and North Korea must submit to anytime, anywhere inspections, and any agreement with North Korea must be permanent in nature.

Is that an outline of a pretty good deal?

Secretary POMPEO. I said “I do” three times. It’s starting to sound like my wedding. Yes. That’s an outline of the kind of deal that would achieve what President Trump is intending to do in our discussions with North Korea.

Senator GRAHAM. So I am encouraged to find that there’s bipartisan support for what a good deal should look like. How we get it is—we’ll do our best, and I think you’re the right guy to try, and I hope we succeed, because if we fail, it will be very bad.

SYRIA

Syria—we have about 2,200 troops in Syria. Is that correct?

Secretary POMPEO. That’s correct, yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. And the State Department’s plan for Syria—can it be accomplished without some military presence on our part any time soon?

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, we’re not at a place yet. We’re taking the lead to achieve the political resolution that has proven elusive since the uprising in Syria. We are not yet in a position where we have sufficient leverage to achieve the political outcome that is in the best interest of the United States and the world.

Senator GRAHAM. If we withdrew from the north without sound thinking, do you worry about the Turkey-Kurdish conflict arising anew?

Secretary POMPEO. So there are a number of things that I worry about in the north. You certainly described one of them. In Idlib Province, Al Qaeda Nusra front a host of terrorists as well that I’m very concerned about.

TURKEY

Senator GRAHAM. President Erdoğan just was reelected. I think he has a 5-year term. Can you outline for this subcommittee where you think we’re at with Turkey, and what could we do to help the administration to make Turkey a better partner?

Secretary POMPEO. So in my time in this administration, it’s been difficult with the Turks. It was difficult before that as well. Our decision to work closely with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) was something that they were not happy about. We’ve made progress now 3 weeks ago in and around Manbij. We came to an understanding about our forces would work together to resolve a very complicated issue between Kurds and Arabs and a real mix. So progress, and we are hopeful we can build on that. They will ultimately be part of a political resolution there and an important part, and we need to recognize that and do our best to work alongside them. Now that the election is over, I’m hopeful we can begin an even more productive conversation with them.

IRAQ

Senator GRAHAM. Iraq—could you give us an assessment of the political progress in Iraq, some of the challenges, and, if you could, answer this question: If the Iraqis would accept a residual force made up of NATO and U.S. forces, do you think it's in our interest to leave that force behind?

Secretary POMPEO. So that's the current administration's plan. There is some work that will be advanced, I hope, at the NATO summit here in a few days to develop that NATO force. We've watched closely—our ambassador there and our team on the ground—as the election took place, and now government formation efforts have begun to achieve a government in Iraq that was an Iraqi national unity government with as little Iranian influence as we can possibly achieve. We're doing our best to facilitate that where it's appropriate.

But, ultimately, the Iraqi people will decide the formation of their government. I hope it's one where we can reduce the influence of Iran. I think most of the Iraqi people want that as well.

YEMEN

Senator GRAHAM. Speaking of Iran, Yemen, do you think it's important that Iran not be allowed to dominate Yemen through the Houthis or any other group?

Secretary POMPEO. I do, and we can see even as recently as today enormous Iranian influence impacting how the Houthis are responding to the current actions taking place in Yemen.

IRAN

Senator GRAHAM. Do you trust the Russians to drive the Iranians out of Syria?

Secretary POMPEO. That's a specific question. I could probably generalize the answer. With respect to the Russian capacity to do that is an open-ended question, and if they could achieve that, if the Russians could get the Iranians out of there, I would applaud it.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, well, I trust them about as much to do that as I do to police chemical weapons.

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Finally, your counterpart, Secretary Mattis, and the Department of Defense—you all have been a great team, by the way—when he was CENTCOM commander, he said the following, paraphrasing: If you cut the State Department's budget, you'd better buy me more ammunition. Do you agree with that general concept?

Secretary POMPEO. Conceptually, diplomacy is and ought to be at the very center of dispute resolution around the world and can keep our young men and women in uniform out of harm's way.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, this subcommittee and full committee is open to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to help you. We may have our differences, but I really am pleased with the leadership you've shown early on, and we want to help you be successful.

Senator Leahy.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET REQUEST

Secretary Pompeo, in earlier testimony, you highlighted four areas of the budget—security assistance, funding to counter ISIS, humanitarian aid, and global health—as priorities of the administration that are sustained or increased compared to the fiscal year 2018 request. The fiscal year 2018 request, of course, was a slash in funding for each of those programs, and was rejected by Republicans and Democrats alike in the Congress.

Now, the President's fiscal year 2019 request compared to the fiscal year 2018 enacted level is global health would be cut by 23 percent, humanitarian aid would be cut by 17 percent, and security assistance would be cut by 19 percent. Is there anything you would change about the fiscal year 2019 budget request?

Secretary POMPEO. It did happen before my time. I'll get my swing in fiscal year 2020. But suffice it to say I know when the budget was put together—the President has lots of things to consider, not just State Department's budget—it was an effort to try and balance. You all were gracious and we got an increase at State Department and at DoD, things that impact national security. We're looking forward to our conversation with you.

Senator LEAHY. Would you be horribly upset if we did as we did in the last budget to restore the cuts?

You don't have to answer that.

Secretary POMPEO. The answer is I'm looking forward to the conversation so that we can get it right. We can make sure that we don't have resources we don't need and we have the ones that we do.

Senator LEAHY. My question is as much rhetorical as anything, because the Congress intends to restore the cuts.

NORTH KOREA

I am told there are a number of requests for a briefing about North Korea, and that it has been rescheduled a couple of times at your request. The President has said that North Korea no longer poses a nuclear threat. We're concerned about that. I am going to want to ask you what, if anything, North Korea has done to dismantle its nuclear arsenal. I realize these are questions you cannot answer in open session. Will you commit to an all Senators briefing—we can have it in a classified setting—to discuss exactly where we are with North Korea?

Secretary POMPEO. I will, or I do, yes. I'm happy to provide that briefing.

IRAN

Senator LEAHY. Thank you. Before the Iran nuclear agreement was signed, Prime Minister Netanyahu and others said that Iran was only weeks or months away from building an atomic bomb. That is why many supported the agreement. You recently gave a speech on Iran policy. You listed 12 conditions Iran must meet in order for the Trump administration to agree to a new deal. Iran immediately rejected the 12 conditions. The European Union's foreign policy chief stated there was no alternative to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). So if in the next month, or in

3 to 6 months, Iran resumes full speed ahead to build a nuclear weapon, what do we do?

Secretary POMPEO. So I'll describe to you the path forward as we see it. You referred to the 12 structural changes we hope that the Iranian leadership will undertake. I think a fair reading of any of those would come to nothing more than asking Iran to be a normal country, the same kind of thing we ask of Belgium and others.

Senator LEAHY. I don't dispute that, Mr. Secretary, but the Iranians have rejected the conditions. So what do we do?

Secretary POMPEO. We put pressure on them in the same way we do other countries that present proliferation risks. We execute diplomacy. We do our best to gain allies. We've made progress on that. We've got allies all across the Gulf states. We've got allies in other parts of the world. We'll be meeting at the political ministry level a week from today. I'll be meeting with my foreign minister counterparts in Brussels here before long to develop a path forward.

Senator LEAHY. Well, is Mr. Netanyahu right that Iran is only weeks away from building a nuclear weapon?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't want to get into the details of the intelligence, but I think we have publicly said before that they have a breakout capacity that is in a number of months, 12 months to be more precise.

CUBA AND CHINA HEALTH INCIDENTS

Senator LEAHY. Thank you very much. I want to ask about the health incidents involving U.S. personnel in Cuba and China. In Cuba, the administration has repeatedly, from the beginning, referred to them as attacks. In China, when the same thing seemed to have happened, they were called incidents. In Cuba, a Level 3 Travel Advisory was triggered by the ordered departure of Embassy personnel. In China, the Department issued a health alert, and no ordered departure.

You said China has responded in a way that is exactly the right response. In Cuba, we were told that they failed to take appropriate steps to protect our diplomats. Why the difference? Was it not the same event in both China and Cuba?

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, that's a very good question. I don't know if they were the same events. It is the case that the medical condition, the single medical condition to date in China is, as the medical folks would say, consistent with what happened in Cuba. We're now up to two dozen plus in Cuba. We do not know the source of either of these. We are continuing to investigate in both places. We have received better initial responses from the Chinese Government than we did from the Cuban Government on how to deal with them. But neither of those has led to a satisfactory outcome so we can determine how to keep foreign service officers and State Department officials and Foreign Commercial Service Office officials serving in embassies in those two places safe.

Senator LEAHY. And we have not thrown Chinese foreign diplomats out of the United States as we did Cubans for virtually the same kind of attack.

Secretary POMPEO. At this point, the magnitude, scope, consistency, time period are different. But, Senator, I am deeply aware

that if we determine that we face a similar situation there, you can expect that the response that our Government would take would be commensurate with the rest of our officers.

Senator LEAHY. My time is up. I will speak further about this at some point.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Hyde-Smith.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here. I, too, am very glad you're here and appreciate that you recognize the seriousness of everything that we're facing. I have a lot of confidence there. So thank you for serving.

HEZBOLLAH

Mr. Secretary, as you're well aware, Israel is our closest ally in the Middle East. It's a democracy surrounded by many enemies whose stated policy is its destruction. One of those enemies is Hezbollah. How would you describe the relationship between Iran and Hezbollah?

Secretary POMPEO. So Hezbollah is a fully funded client terrorist organization of the Iranian regime, active along multiple dimensions, certainly kinetic, that is, small arms and rockets, a very capable intelligence force, active not only in the region in the West around the Israeli-Lebanon border, but now also active in supporting Iran and Assad in Syria as well. And I should add Hezbollah also has active efforts for external plotting, including in places like the United States.

ISRAEL SECURITY

Senator HYDE-SMITH. Do you have the appropriate amount of resources to carry out a policy, which supports Israel's defense and stability?

Secretary POMPEO. I believe that we do, yes, ma'am.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. And, lastly, what are the areas of cooperation the United States needs next with Israel?

Secretary POMPEO. My experience, I guess, just 8 weeks here, but in my previous role, is we have no better partner along many dimensions than the Israelis, not only in the work that we do to help keep Israel safe and secure, but the work that they do to help us push back against terror threats against the United States as well. There may be other opportunities to do more and do better, but we have a really solid working relationship across diplomat, military, and intelligence agencies in each of our two governments.

Senator HYDE-SMITH. I know you've been very busy. You and I both have been on the job about the same amount of time, about 2 months. Thank you very much.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NORTH KOREA

Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here this afternoon. I know that the administration is committed to an agreement with North Korea on their nuclear weapons that I think has been described as

complete and verifiable. Is that the term that you use in talking about that agreement?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, ma'am.

Senator SHAHEEN. In order to get that kind of an agreement, I think we need to know—and, hopefully, you will agree with this—that we need to know the scope of their nuclear weapons program. So we need to know how many weapons they have, how much nuclear material, facilities, that sort of thing.

Can you tell me—have we requested that kind of a list from North Korea, and what is their response to that request?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I'm confident I'll get a handful of questions like this today. I'm going to answer them each the same way. I'm not prepared to talk about the details of the discussions that are taking place. I think it would be inappropriate and, frankly, counterproductive to achieving the end state that we're hoping to achieve. They're watching this hearing.

Know that it is unmistakable the things that we know that the North Koreans know we need, not only from the President's summit but from the previous encounters that I've had. There were a significant number of working level meetings that took place in multiple places, including in Panmunjom, in the run-up to the Singapore summit, that North Koreans understand the scope of the requests that we're making with respect to denuclearization and the elements that would be required.

One of those elements, obviously, would be a thorough understanding of each of the elements you laid out, their fissile material on hand, their capacity to continue to develop that material, weaponization efforts, engineering, physics efforts, as well as the weapons and missiles that would deliver them. So we've been pretty unambiguous in our conversations about what we mean when we say complete denuclearization.

Senator SHAHEEN. My understanding in the past negotiations is that North Korea has been unwilling to provide that kind of an inventory of what they have. Can you at least tell us who is leading the continuing negotiations with North Korea? Is there an inter-agency group that's doing that? Are those negotiations ongoing? Where are they taking place?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. With respect to your first point, it is the case that previous efforts have not been able to achieve that complete declaration of the North Korean systems. Some small pieces, some pockets they were able to achieve. It's not been done. I now think I've spoken to most all of the folks who have gone at this problem previously. I spoke to Chris Hill just again this past week.

With respect to ongoing negotiations, it's me. I'm leading the effort. It's an interagency effort. We have significant teams that stretch from our organization, multiple pieces of our organization, our proliferation experts, our Korea-Asia experts, because this is not just a U.S.-North Korea issue at the end of the day. So a broad range of State Department excellence, DOE, DoD—I'm going to forget somebody and they're going to come after me. There are NSA officials serving, helping us as well. But the effort, the negotiations at the working level, are being led by my team.

Senator SHAHEEN. And those negotiations are ongoing?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, ma'am.

Senator SHAHEEN. I believe the fourth tenet of the agreement that was signed in Singapore had to do with returning the remains of Americans who are still missing in action from the Korean war. One of my constituents in New Hampshire runs a nonprofit that seeks to locate and repatriate the remains of Americans who are still missing. I know that the President has made some statements—most recently said that they've already sent back or are in the process of sending back the remains of our great heroes. It's my understanding that, in fact, we have not yet received any remains from North Korea and that in the past, the efforts to repatriate those people who died in the Korean war have been fraught with difficult challenges. Let's put it that way.

So can you tell me what the status is of those transfers, and are we expecting any remains to be repatriated any time in the foreseeable future?

Secretary POMPEO. I am optimistic that we will begin to have two opportunities. One is to receive some remains in the not too distant future. But then there's a great deal of work with companies like the one you described, nonprofits and the like, who have been at this previously. We will need to gain access for that process to begin.

We are intent on denuclearization. Make no mistake about it. But we are also, for all the obvious reasons, intent on doing our best to get back as many remains for America. There are other foreigners there as well. We've had other countries ask to participate in this, too. We are dogged in trying to facilitate this as quickly as we possibly can.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I appreciate that. And just to be clear, we have not yet received any—

Secretary POMPEO. That's correct, Senator. We have not yet physically received them.

SYRIA

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I know that Syria has come up in the hearing this afternoon already, and I think maybe it was Senator Graham who mentioned Manbij and the situation there. Are you aware of any plans to withdraw our forces from around Manbij?

Secretary POMPEO. No, ma'am. Let me back up and say this more clearly.

Senator SHAHEEN. In the near immediate future.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, that's correct, and conditions-based as agreed to with the Turks. There's an outline for how we're going to execute this, what the objectives are, and how that would be undertaken jointly by each of our two countries.

Senator SHAHEEN. So I said immediate future. How do we define that? Are we talking weeks, months, end of the year, next year?

Secretary POMPEO. There's no timeline. It is truly conditions-based. It's when we believe we have set up political processes that can sustain the conditions on the ground in Manbij in a way that's satisfactory to each of the two sides.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Lankford.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, it's great to see you again. Every time I flick on the news, you're on another continent, and you're taking care of another big issue. From a grateful nation that sees a lot of the issues that are happening around the world and realize that there are many, many issues around the world, thanks for taking those on, because you have become the tip of the spear in diplomacy for taking a lot of very, very difficult issues on. So I appreciate you doing that very much.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Let me bounce around several different comments with you and be able to talk through some things. Central America has been very near and dear to my heart, and I've engaged multiple times with the folks in the Northern Triangle, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. I think they're exceptionally important, not only to the Western hemisphere. In immigration issues, they'll be exceptionally important. This Congress has committed over and over again dollars to that area. Vice President Biden—this was a major effort that he had, the Alliance for Prosperity. We followed through at the end of the Obama administration with funding, and we've done it two more times for that—have another \$500 million-plus going to the region again.

My question is: Are we doing this well? Can you track some of the metrics there? Are there things that we're doing well that you see impact? Are there things that we need to do better in what we're doing that would have a greater impact and engagement with that region?

Secretary POMPEO. That's a great question, Senator Lankford. I don't know the answer to that. I will say we have devoted a great deal of U.S. resources to this, not only the money that you speak of, but time. The Vice President is there today, having conversations that aren't too different than the ones Vice President Biden had. That would suggest that it would be worse absent us having done that, or that we haven't made sufficient progress.

It's something I've asked my team to come back and describe to me, what we've done, which programs work and don't. We have several. We have some that fall into our Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), others that go through USAID, others that are facilitated through DoD. We need to figure out which ones work and a path forward so that we can stabilize that region and improve their chances for democracy there and reduce the immigration issues that bedevil us today.

Senator LANKFORD. The requirements that we put on that money, the metrics that we require, the method of how we distribute it—any issues or concerns you have?

Secretary POMPEO. I'm sorry?

Senator LANKFORD. With how we're distributing the money and any requirements we're putting on them to receive it, because, for instance, Honduras is receiving a greater amount than Guatemala is based on certification. Is that working, not working? Is that—what would your suspicion be?

Secretary POMPEO. I suspect that the conditions that are in place reduce our flexibility in a way that sometimes reduces our ability to be effective. I can't answer that any more specifically today.

MEXICO

Senator LANKFORD. I appreciate that. The Mexican elections has moved north a little bit here. They are coming up this weekend. Obviously, there's a lot riding on our southern partner and what happens in those elections. What engagement do we have right now? Are we in a wait and see mode to see what happens and how we're going to engage?

Secretary POMPEO. We're not in a wait and see mode. There's too much going on. We deal with them across a broad range of issues, not the least of which are people, immigration issues, narcotics, transiting issues, as well as goods, stuff coming across, and you see that in our trade negotiations as well. Those are ongoing.

I've met with Mr. Videgaray a number of times in the course of my first 8 weeks. I expect that I will head that way before too long, after the election, to meet with both the current government and perhaps whoever is elected. They are an important southern nation. They present lots of opportunity and lots of challenges for our country.

INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

Senator LANKFORD. Yes, I agree. Let me switch gears a little bit. There is a tool that—the BBG and Voice of America. I'm interested to know in our cooperation with them—because they are the forward face around the world for the United States. What kind of cooperation do we see with the messaging that you would see as valuable to be able to put out as a face for America and a messaging for the American message? Much of the world gets their view of America from Voice of America and the BBG. Where is that integration right now? What needs to be better?

Secretary POMPEO. I haven't had a chance to visit with them yet. My counselor who I brought in has had a chance to go out there. His report back was that there are pieces of it that are working well. They sync with what we're trying to do at the State Department, because we have a public diplomacy function operation as well—places it's working really well and others where I think he described it as broken, disconnected, not well functioning.

There's been leadership challenges at the BBG. I think that's a polite description of what's taking place there. I'm hopeful that we have turned the corner and can begin to use what is an incredibly invaluable tool for American diplomacy.

Senator LANKFORD. I agree it's a very, very valuable tool, but we seem to have three different forward communicating tools that are out there without real coordination and occasionally without good leadership in areas. That's an area that I think we need to do greater oversight here on this subcommittee and we would like your participation in to be able to help that out.

Secretary POMPEO. The only thing I would add to that is I'm good—I agree. It is not an absence of resources. I actually believe we have ample resources to conduct that mission. It's on me and our team to execute them.

SYRIA

Senator LANKFORD. So let me ask you a hard question, not that any of these are simple, I guess. Can we move forward in Syria long-term with Iran present and with Assad present?

Secretary POMPEO. No.

Senator LANKFORD. Strategically, is that where we're going as a country? As we are negotiating with the Russians, as we're negotiating with the Turks and the Jordanians that are so exceptionally important to us in the region, do we have a consistent cooperation with them on that?

Secretary POMPEO. So I've spent a fair amount of time working this issue. I'm hopeful we can get back to the political process that was stalled out before I took office, a couple of months prior to that. We have lots of regional allies. The Gulf states are all very helpful. The Jordanians are very helpful. The Europeans here, too, share a common understanding. The Israelis, most certainly. It is the case that the Assad regime has been enormously successful over what amounts to now, coming up on 7 years, I guess, since the beginning. From America's perspective, it seems to me Iran presents the greatest threat to the United States and the place we ought to focus our efforts, at least at the beginning, with respect to the political resolution.

Senator LANKFORD. Great.

UNITED NATIONAL RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY (UNRWA)

Mr. Chairman, I want to submit just a question for the record as well dealing with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). The administration has requested to remove funding from the UNRWA. But I'd be very interested to know what's the strategy on what to do with that, because we're not going to walk away from the Palestinian people. But, clearly, the UNRWA model is not working and hasn't worked for decades and decades and decades. So I understand why we're reducing the funding, but I'd like to know the strategy of where we go now.

Thank you.

[The information follows:]

Following an extensive review, the administration determined that the United States will no longer provide financial contributions to UNRWA. UNRWA's fundamental business model is simply unsustainable and has been in crisis mode for many years. We are very mindful of and deeply concerned regarding the impact upon innocent Palestinians, especially school children, of the failure of UNRWA and key members of the regional and international donor community to reform and reset the UNRWA way of doing business. Palestinians, wherever they live, deserve better than an endlessly crisis-driven service provision model. They deserve to be able to plan for the future. We have offered to begin a dialogue with key stakeholders about how some UNRWA services might be provided by others, as appropriate, in order to provide Palestinians, including children, with a more durable and dependable path towards a brighter tomorrow.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Murphy.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here. Since charts are fair game, I will just briefly begin with one of my own. Mr. Secretary, this is a very short inventory of President Trump's insults towards

our allies and partners. I know you can't read it. I can't even read it. The typeface has to be so small because we couldn't even include all of the deleterious things that the President has said about our historic allies over the course of the last year and a half.

I think this treatment concerns both Democrats and Republicans, not because we don't think that our allies sometimes should be subject to criticism, but because we think that the pace and the vitriol of this criticism is harming in real time U.S. national security interests. The latest was a tweet that seemed to cheer on the political opponents and political opposition to the German chancellor. Especially in Europe, this difficult and hard treatment of our allies in very personal tones elevates the right and the nationalists, the very people who are trying to destroy NATO and the EU.

So I guess it wasn't surprising to many of us that the Germans, in particular, have been so far a very hard case in the effort of this administration to try to reapply sanctions against Iran. They are not looking to us to reapply a sanctions regime. They're doing the opposite. They passed legislation that gives their companies attempted safe harbor or a hold-harmless harbor from U.S. secondary sanctions.

It's hard to imagine how we will put together a sanctions regime against Iran that, in your words, will be the strongest ever if we are creating this space between the United States and our allies in Europe. We should all remember that the U.S. does \$300 million in trade, historically, with Iran. Germany does \$2.5 billion. China does \$23 billion.

So maybe I'm just asking for an update on discussions with the Europeans and our partners with respect to progress being made or not being made to reapply sanctions. That's the foundation of the administration's plan, and it seems that this particularly rough treatment of our European allies is pushing us further away from that new sanctions regime against Iran rather than closer to it.

Secretary POMPEO. Senator Murphy, it is the case there have been difficult discussions since the U.S. decision to withdraw. There's no doubt about that. The Europeans had consistently talked about a different view, a different path forward, a plan that they'd preferred we chose differently. But I will say over the last handful of weeks, there's an increasing recognition that we need to find a way forward together. So when I talked about building the toughest sanctions in history, I am still intent and optimistic that I can do it.

Remember, it's not just about three European countries. There are many European countries that are prepared to assist us in this. There are countries throughout Asia. We have our Gulf state partners as well. This is a broad coalition. Sometimes the focus just ends up being on France and Britain and Germany, not to underestimate their importance. They're critical partners. I want them alongside of us for sure.

But to get a global sanctions regime requires an effort all around the world. We have teams that have fanned out across the world in the weeks after announcement of the withdrawal to begin to work on shaping what that would look like. My recollection is that when the previous administration talked about their ability to

build this up, they talked about it in terms of years. I'm hoping to beat that substantially.

SYRIA

Senator MURPHY. I wanted to return to an answer you gave to Senator Lankford. He asked you if there was a way forward in Syria with Iran present, and your answer was pretty definitive. It was no. Iran was present in Syria, had influence there, well before the civil war started. I think most everyone that's watched that country over time doesn't foresee a circumstance in which at the end of this civil conflict, Iran won't still have a significant presence or influence.

So your answer to Senator Lankford's question—is it a suggestion that the U.S. policy is to take a series of actions to pursue a course that rids Iranian presence or influence in Syria? Because that certainly seems to require a heavier lift of American involvement both on the military and diplomatic sides than this administration is willing to put in.

Secretary POMPEO. Perhaps I was too definitive. Your factual observation about the fact that there was Iranian influence in Syria before the revolution is absolutely accurate. It would be my guess that there will be Iranian influence there when we all pass.

But when I'm thinking of Iran, I'm talking about units and formations and command structure and Quds Force officers freely passing through the country, fomenting and underwriting, importantly, with financial assistance terror operations and forces in support of the Syrian regime. When I say Iran, I'm talking about their military capacity in a way that is very different today than it was, I think, when you're referring to 10 or 15 years ago.

RUSSIA AND THE GROUP OF SEVEN

Senator MURPHY. That's fair. Lastly, we were all very surprised, our allies were surprised, when the President announced his interest in bringing Russia back into the G-7 without pre-conditions. At the very least, he certainly didn't enunciate any conditions upon the invitation that he made getting ready for the G-7 conference.

Has the position changed? Do we have an invitation open to—or are we willing to allow Russia to rejoin the G-7 if they have not fully implemented the Minsk Agreement?

Secretary POMPEO. I think the President's comments speak for themselves in a sense of—and you saw Ambassador Bolton's announcement of the last hour or so. The President deeply believes that having Russia be part of these important geostrategic conversations is inevitable, and that there's a long history of that.

We have about as poor a relationship with Russia as I can recall in my adult lifetime. We have been harder on Russia in this administration than has been the case in many previous administrations. The President is looking forward to an opportunity to find those handful of places where we can have productive conversations that lead to improvements for each of our two countries. I think, eyes wide open, that that field space is pretty small. They don't share our values in the same way that the European countries do, but I think the President is hopeful that we can reduce the tempera-

ture, reduce the risk for America and find a handful of places where we can perhaps get a good outcome in Ukraine.

Senator MURPHY. It sounds like the President, then, is open to allowing them to come back in if the Minsk Agreement isn't fulfilled if he were to get concessions somewhere else.

Secretary POMPEO. I couldn't tell you how the President and I will make tradeoffs. It'll ultimately be his decision. I couldn't tell you which set of tradeoffs would ultimately be—I'm confident that I could identify a set of tradeoffs for you for you to agree that that was the right outcome as well.

Senator MURPHY. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Leahy.

Thank you, Secretary Pompeo. It's great to be with you again. As you reference in your written testimony, there is an important opportunity for us together to build a development finance institution through something called the BUILD Act, the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act, which actually passed out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday by a 20 to 1 vote. It has strong bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate and has been welcomed by the administration, and in a late revision, the Secretary of State will be the chairman of the board of the new institution.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CORPORATION

So please tell me, if you would, how this new international development finance corporation will be a tool in the toolkit for the State Department, for USAID, for our Government overall to pursue development in the world and how you see it as a component part of advancing our interests and values in the developing world.

Secretary POMPEO. Thanks, Senator Coons. Thanks for the question. So it doesn't replace any of the other things. It's not intended to eliminate other actions, other humanitarian assistance, other development assistance that we're providing. But it does fundamentally reshape how we think about it and how our organization thinks about it. It means we have to rise to the occasion, too.

It won't be the first time, but it'll be the first time, I think, in a strategic and coherent way we work to bring private sources of capital to bear alongside the government assistance—certainly, U.S. resources, but resources from other countries as well, where we strategically identify targeted needs for development. We identify the kinds of capital that they need. It's not always the case that they need a grant. It's not always the case that a loan will work. There are lots of different structures that can be achieved, and what I think the BUILD Act accomplishes is it gives us the flexibility to identify a development need, bring to bear the right resources over the right time period, and manage it in a way that effectively delivers the outcome and measures it all along the way.

Senator COONS. I look forward to working with you, should it be enacted, as we implement this new tool.

CENTRAL AMERICA

When President Trump signed the Executive order ending the separation of children and families at the border, it didn't end the ongoing crisis in Central America that's one of the real drivers of families fleeing the chaos of three countries in Central America.

Chairman Graham, I'd like to ask unanimous consent that an editorial from my friend and predecessor, Vice President Biden, be entered into the record.

[The information follows:]

THE BORDER WON'T BE SECURE UNTIL CENTRAL AMERICA IS



Central American migrants at the San Ysidro border crossing in Tijuana, Mexico, in April. (Carolyn Van Houten/The Washington Post)

BY JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., June 25

Joseph R. Biden Jr. was Vice President of the United States from 2009 to 2017.

When President Trump signed an executive order ending the separation of children from their families at the border, it did not end the crisis in Central America. Nor should it relieve our moral anguish at seeing the poorest and most vulnerable treated in ways that are fundamentally at odds with our nation's values.

The moment also calls for a renewed focus on the so-called Northern Triangle of Central America—the countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, which together represent the overwhelming source of migrants crossing our southern border. Unless we address the root causes driving migration from this region, any solutions focused solely on border protection and immigration enforcement will be insufficient.

This is terrain I know all too well. In 2014, President Barack Obama asked me to lead the international response to the surge of migrants that ultimately resulted in 68,000 unaccompanied children from Central America crossing into the United States. That summer, I met with Central American leaders in Guatemala to chart a plan to reduce migration, as well as to make it clear that undocumented migration was risky, dangerous and offered scant hope of legal status or citizenship.

It soon became evident that migration from Central America could not be resolved merely by stronger enforcement at the U.S. border, let alone by building a wall. Instead, we needed to tackle the drivers of migration: crime, violence, corruption and lack of opportunity. We knew the cost of investing in a secure and prosperous Cen-

tral America was modest compared with the cost of allowing violence and poverty to fester.

Following intensive negotiations between the Obama administration and the Northern Triangle presidents, Congress provided \$750 million in 2016 to fund a whole-of-government effort to effect deep and lasting change in Central America. Because Central American governments had long been perceived—with good reason—as corrupt, inept and incapable of delivering basic services to their citizens, I supported Congress in tying the aid package to concrete commitments by regional governments to clean up their police, increase tax collection, fight corruption and create the opportunities necessary to convince would-be migrants to remain in their countries. In turn, the countries pledged billions of dollars in their own money to deliver on the promise of prosperity, security and governance. We also implemented new programs to help those in immediate danger by allowing them to apply for asylum without the dangerous journey to the United States.

By the end of the Obama administration, we began to see results. The murder rate in Honduras dropped by a third since its peak in 2011. Guatemala improved its tax collection and made inroads against corruption, renewing a vital U.N.-backed anticorruption commission until 2019. El Salvador was aggressively targeting the financial networks of transnational criminal organizations. Meanwhile, energy cooperation in the region extended access to electricity in countries such as Honduras, where as much as 12 percent of the population is still unconnected. But this progress required face-to-face diplomacy to convince leaders of these nations to act against their own political instincts and to establish clear benchmarks that demonstrated a real will to change. We knew that sustained, bipartisan U.S. engagement—and, yes, pressure—were necessary for progress.

The Trump administration came into office determined to slash aid to Central America, and only partially succeeded because of the pushback from engaged members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. Still, U.S. assistance has fallen by nearly 20 percent, from \$750 million in 2016 to \$615 million this year.

After a promising early conference in Miami on security and prosperity in Central America in June 2017, attended by Vice President Pence and several Cabinet secretaries, the three Northern Triangle presidents have not met jointly with a senior U.S. official in well over a year. By contrast, I met with them three times during my final year in office. Occasional bilateral visits such as the one earlier this month between Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández cannot replace a comprehensive regional approach to reduce the drivers of migration.

Fortunately, there is still time to build on the policy that emerged from the last major migration crisis in 2014—a policy modeled in part on the successful, bipartisan approach to Plan Colombia. When the Vice President travels this week to Guatemala, the president should send him with a mandate to revive the intense diplomatic and aid efforts that gave rise to the Alliance for Prosperity, and opened a window of hope for the most besieged countries in our hemisphere.

We can both strengthen U.S. border security and treat migrants arriving from Central America with dignity and decency instead of cruelty and callousness. But their overwhelming desire to flee their countries and risk everything to enter the United States shows that their governments are still failing them. This migration will only continue unless we keep up the pressure and provide the support to make the Northern Triangle of Central America a prosperous and secure place to call home.

Senator COONS. As the former Vice President lays out, unless we address the root causes of migration from Central America, any solutions focused solely on border protection and immigration enforcement will most likely be insufficient, and, repeatedly, the administration has proposed slashing aid to Central America. It has fallen nearly 20 percent from \$750 million in 2016 to just over \$600 million this year.

Do you agree, Mr. Secretary, that a renewed focus on the Northern Triangle countries of Central America, which together represent the overwhelming number of migrants seeking to cross our southern border, is necessary to address this problem, and will next year's budget reflect that increased priority? And when the Vice President travels to Guatemala this week, does he plan to re-

vive diplomatic and aid efforts to support the U.S. strategy for engagement in Central America?

Secretary POMPEO. The answer to your second question is yes. The answer to your first question—and I think Senator Lankford asked a similar question—I don’t think the region has been lacking for American financial support. I think we’ve provided an awful lot of financial support to them over the past years, well intended, and I’m sure some of it effective. So I’m not certain what the right number is to ask for financial assistance.

What I think is more important is that we ensure that there’s an outcome that we can deliver. I am not convinced today, if you said, “Mr. Secretary, you’ve got two times or three times as much money and you can spend it next year,” that we could effectively deliver an outcome that would achieve what you’re describing. I agree with your—the hypothesis of your question is right. If we don’t resolve those issues in those three countries, we’re going to have challenges along our southern border for years and years to come.

Senator COONS. And I think it’s important that we continue to meet our legal and treaty obligations and, if possible, by having better access to opportunities to apply for asylum for refuge at our embassies in these three countries rather than having families risk this very long and dangerous trek. I hope we can make progress on that.

RUSSIA

Let me ask a last series of questions. I know Senator Murphy was also asking about recent press statements by Ambassador Bolton and reporting that strongly suggests President Trump is planning to meet with Russian president Vladimir Putin.

You know, on June 8, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Coats warned Russia is attempting to influence our 2018 midterm elections this coming November and to divide the Transatlantic Alliance. He pointed out Russia has meddled in elections in France, Germany, Norway, Spain, Ukraine, and has otherwise overtly or covertly tried to divide the NATO Alliance and to interfere with our allies. Will Russian election interference in the United States and in a way that has harmed our key NATO allies be a focus of this summit with President Putin and a focus of the upcoming NATO summit?

Secretary POMPEO. Here’s what I can say. As far as the NATO summit, I’ve seen the agenda. That absolutely will be there. I know that. Every conversation that I’m aware of between the United States Government and our counterparts—certainly mine with Foreign Minister Lavrov now two or three times—I’ve raised the issue in each and every conversation. I am confident that when the President meets with Vladimir Putin, he will make clear that meddling in our elections is completely unacceptable.

SYRIA

Senator COONS. I hope our President will hold Putin and Russia accountable for their aggression against Ukraine, for their support for the murderous regime of Bashar Al Assad, for their interference in our election, and others. I am concerned by reports that in

southwest Syria, the Assad regime is on the march and is taking aggressive action, and I wonder, if I could, in closing just ask—I agree with the proposition advanced by the Chairman at the beginning that we need to remain on the ground, we need to remain engaged in Syria in order to have the opportunity to shape any negotiations that might resolve this horrible conflict. Is it your understanding that we’ve sent some signal to Assad and to Russia that we won’t block advances in southwestern Syria that might create now an opportunity for Iranian influence to advance closer to our vital allies, Jordan and Israel?

Secretary POMPEO. The U.S. forces that are present there don’t have the ability to reach to the region that you’re describing. The Russians have flown missions in southwest Syria over the past several days as well.

Senator COONS. Isn’t that in violation of an agreement we had reached with the Russians?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir, it is, and we have both spoken to them about it and issued public statements indicating exactly that.

Senator COONS. That would seem to me an important agenda item for an upcoming summit both with our vital NATO allies and, if there were to be one, with the president of Russia. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Just to briefly follow up, are they listening to what we say and do they care?

Secretary POMPEO. I’ll answer the first. I can’t speak to the latter. They’re certainly listening. It’s not just our voice. It’s the voice of the Israelis and the Jordanians as well, who have made clear that we find moving in a way that is inconsistent with the agreement that was signed off on by Vladimir Putin himself is unacceptable.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, this is a defining moment, I think, for our presence in the Mideast. Russia is trying to take advantage of a vacuum that’s been created by both administrations, and I hope that not only they listen to what we say, but they take seriously what we say, and, clearly, they’re not.

Senator Daines.

Senator DAINES. Chairman Graham, thank you for holding this hearing, and I want to thank Secretary Pompeo for your service and coming before this subcommittee today.

PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

Secretary Pompeo, I spent more than half a decade in China in the private sector. I’ve led multiple congressional delegations (CODELS) to visit China since coming to Congress as well as its neighbors. In fact, I’ve been over there twice in the last 90 days. China’s growing regional and global influence is readily apparent. I believe it’s critically important that we, as a nation founded on freedom and the rule of law, avoid complacency and that we are clear-eyed about the challenges as well as the opportunities that China brings, especially in its relationship with the United States, a relationship I see as perhaps the most consequential relationship between any two countries in the 21st century. We cannot just view these ongoing negotiations as a standard trade dispute. But it’s imperative that we keep in mind China’s very strategic approach and

long-term goal of becoming the world's superpower, both economically and militarily.

Secretary Pompeo, in my view, there's only so much that can be done to counter China unilaterally. I strongly believe that it's critical we work with our allies, China's neighbors in the region to mitigate China's malign actions, whether it be in the South China Sea, their outright theft of IP, human rights abuses, or ongoing unfair trade practices. This is especially important as China is engaging with many of our allies now in the region via the regional comprehensive economic partnership.

Secretary Pompeo, what are some of your strategic goals in engaging with our allies in the Indo-Pacific region to proactively counter Chinese efforts to expand its influence?

Secretary POMPEO. Thanks for the question. Secretary Mattis, Secretary Mnuchin, and I have each spent substantial time working on exactly this problem set. You defined it pretty well. Our toolsets are relatively new in the sense of it is the case that I think this challenge that you identified that the world has been very complacent over the last—pick a time horizon—5, 10, 15 years, for sure. We are working through the multilateral organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), all of those to develop strategies in each of the domains that you described. We're working diligently to figure out how we can develop trade relationships in a way that are fair and reciprocal for the United States but that don't benefit China at the same time. You see what the President is doing with respect to China.

Second, with respect to diplomacy, we will come next year and ask for increased resources connected to this region. I know that they did 2 years ago as well. That is, we need to be in each of those countries making clear the case that you are far better off with the United States as your partner and ally than you are with China. I think many of those countries didn't see the negative ramifications for moving closer to China over the last 5 and 10 years as well.

And then Secretary Mattis himself has truly reconfigured the way that the Department of Defense is thinking about the challenge, not only in the South China Sea, but more broadly as Chinese expansion in and around, even through the Indian Ocean, has efforted to improve its capacity to do harm to U.S. interests and, frankly, to global trading interests as well.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Senator DAINES. Secretary Pompeo, thank you, and I'm grateful to see this being elevated to more of a strategic level versus being somewhat, I would argue, tactical in the past. Along those strategic lines, I do believe the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) presents an opportunity to strengthen our ties with our allies, improve market access for U.S. farmers, ranchers, businesses, and substantially increase pressure on China, because a U.S. vacuum creates China to come in and fill it.

Would you support efforts to re-engage with TPP nations in an effort to improve the agreement?

Secretary POMPEO. I would. The President strongly prefers doing these things bilaterally as between us and each of those nations. But I do believe having improved trade relationships with each of the countries, both in Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and Asia more broadly, is not only good for the United States economy, but important for American national security as well.

Senator DAINES. I share that view as well, Mr. Secretary.

RUSSIA

I want to pivot over and talk about Russia for a moment. It's another adversary to U.S. interests, clearly. From their illegitimate annexation of Crimea to their efforts to interfere in U.S. elections, as determined by the U.S. Intelligence Committee, something you know a lot about, their behavior has been completely unacceptable.

In particular, I'm very concerned about the continuing development of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline that has the potential to allow Russia to monopolize much of Europe's energy supply and undermine our European allies' ability to counter Russian influence. Will you use every tool available, whether via sanctions and authorities provided by the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act or otherwise, to impede the development of this pipeline?

Secretary POMPEO. We are actively engaged in an all-of-U.S.-Government approach to convincing European governments and European businesses alike that increased energy dependence on Russia is inconsistent with what it is we're all trying to do in pushing back against Russia. Nord Stream 2 is one of several examples that we have made clear we think goes in completely the wrong direction in terms of allowing the Russians to have the capacity to exert political influence, not only in Germany, but all around Europe.

NORTH KOREA

Senator DAINES. Thank you. I want to shift back quickly as I close to Asia-Pacific and North Korea. Should North Korea not commit to a complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization process, would you commit to walking away from the negotiating table?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. The President has made that very clear.

Senator DAINES. And, lastly, in your assessment, what risk is there of China utilizing a nuclear or unstable North Korea as leverage in other negotiations, whether it be trade related or otherwise?

Secretary POMPEO. I'm sorry. Is the question what evidence?

Senator DAINES. What assessment—is there a risk of China utilizing that?

Secretary POMPEO. I met with President Xi shortly after the Singapore summit. He assured me that they would work side by side along with us to denuclearize North Korea. At this point, I'm going to count on the fact that he has that shared objective with us. We are certainly watching to make sure that every country that's committed to helping us achieve that is actually doing it.

Senator DAINES. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Senator GRAHAM. Very briefly, do you see any backsliding on China's part when it comes to sanctions against North Korea?

Secretary POMPEO. A modest amount, yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Durbin.

THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

Senator DURBIN. Thanks, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Secretary, do you believe NATO is obsolete?

Secretary POMPEO. No, sir. I do not.

Senator DURBIN. When you go to the NATO summit in Brussels in a few weeks and you meet some of your counterparts from other countries, how will you explain that our President has said repeatedly that NATO is obsolete?

Secretary POMPEO. I've had lots of conversations—I don't have to wait until I get to Brussels. I've had lots of conversations with them about NATO. The President has been completely unambiguous about his view. When he spoke in Warsaw, he made very clear his expectations for how we would achieve a strong united Atlantic unity.

Having said that, it would have been very clear to them as well. It is time for them to care as much about pushing back against Russia as we do. So we have pushed them to increase their willingness to support NATO forces as well. Progress has been made, but to date, they've not even lived up to their own promises.

RUSSIA

Senator DURBIN. It's my understanding in the next few months, the European Union will have a meeting and will vote again on whether to continue Russian sanctions. It's also my understanding that the new Italian Government has made it part of the platform of their government that they oppose Russian sanctions, and one nation can veto the sanctions regime of the European Union. It suggests, unless something we can't predict happens, that the European Union will lift its sanctions on Russia in a short time. Is that your understanding?

Secretary POMPEO. I'm more optimistic than you are. I am very hopeful that as we continue to engage with the Europeans and the Italians, in particular, we can convince them that this sanction regime is important to achieving outcomes that are in the best interest of Europe and Italy, in particular.

Senator DURBIN. Well, I hope you can.

Secretary POMPEO. We're hard at that effort already.

Senator DURBIN. I sincerely hope you can. But I would have to say that when you look at our foreign policy today, is it true or not true that we reject the Russian occupation—invasion and occupation of Crimea?

Secretary POMPEO. I want to make sure I answer and don't answer, a double negative. We reject that occupation.

Senator DURBIN. And we reject the Russian invasion, occupation of Eastern Ukraine?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, of course, sir.

Senator DURBIN. And Georgia.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir.

Senator DURBIN. And we believe that there's enough threat to our NATO allies and friends in the Baltics and Poland to have spent—to be spending additional sums of money for enhanced forward presence.

Secretary POMPEO. Indeed, this administration has increased the Estonian Defense Forces (EDF), the advanced forces there in Europe.

Senator DURBIN. Do you think the suggestion of the President of rewarding Russia with membership in the G-7 is consistent with what you've just said?

Secretary POMPEO. I think this administration has been unambiguously tough on Russia. I think it is indisputable.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Senator DURBIN. I might raise that question about the G-7 conference. But let me ask you about another topical interest, immigration at our border. Would you agree with me that it's no coincidence that we're having border challenges at the same time we're facing the worst drug epidemic in the history of our country?

Secretary POMPEO. I'm not sure I'm prepared to opine as to the correlation between those two precisely.

Senator DURBIN. Stick with me for a second. The drug gangs in Central America, the drug cartels in Mexico, have made many parts of those countries virtually lawless.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir.

Senator DURBIN. And the gangs are threatening innocent individuals who in desperation risk their lives to come to our border. The reason the drug gangs are prospering is because of the appetite for narcotics in the United States and the fact that we launder millions of dollars back into those cartels and gangs from our country. Do you see that connection?

Secretary POMPEO. I do. I believe the number now exceeds \$100 billion back to Mexico as a result of the drug trade.

Senator DURBIN. Do you believe we're doing enough when it comes to dealing with the laundering of money back into these drug gangs and cartels from sales in the United States?

Secretary POMPEO. I believe that for many years, we have been ineffective with respect to the movement of monies back and forth in between the two that have supported those cartels and that drug trade. On the demand side here in the United States, we also have an awful lot of work left to do, and our efforts to support the defeat of the narco-terrorists in Mexico have also fallen short. I think in all three dimensions, there remains a great deal of work to do.

OPIOID CRISIS AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Senator DURBIN. Could you address one insidious new narcotic, fentanyl and carfentanyl, which is now coming into the United States and taking many lives and threatens, as a synthetic opioid, to be a nightmare we can't even imagine in our future. What role is China playing in shipping fentanyl to the United States?

Secretary POMPEO. A significant role over the past years in doing that. They have agreed to work with us. I think we're in a better place now than we were even just 6 months ago. Congress has been fantastic in providing resources to the executive branch to push back against this new truly grave threat.

VENEZUELA

Senator DURBIN. I visited Venezuela a few months ago, met with President Maduro, told him if he had a sham election, it wouldn't be recognized by any country in the world, and that he would continue a regime which has created a state of collapse in the Venezuelan economy and incredible negative outcomes in public health. Now that he's gone through with the election, what's our next step to put pressure on him to change?

Secretary POMPEO. We will put additional sanctions in place against the regime. We will continue our diplomatic efforts. The State Department is—we had folks being—we returned the favor to them as well. But we are continuing our diplomatic outreach to try and create conditions where that country has some hope of returning to something that looks more like a democracy that the world—I'm hesitant only because it's an enormous challenge that our tools and capacity to have an impact on have proven insufficient to date.

Senator DURBIN. There's one tool we haven't used, and you know what it is. We are major purchasers of oil to Venezuela. It is critical to what remains of their weakened and failing economy. Would you consider imposing sanctions to stop that trade of oil between the United States and Venezuela?

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, the administration has looked at this a number of times. We continue to review it. There are second and third order ramifications of doing that that make it a little more complicated, and I know you're aware of those, too. I know you get that, too.

Yes, we are certainly reviewing whether there comes a point where we have to suffer the negative ramifications doing that in a way to achieve an outcome that gets the Venezuelan people a chance to avoid the humanitarian crisis that faces them. You have also most 3 million refugees leaving Venezuela. That's, I think, 30 million people—we're talking about almost 10 percent of the Venezuelan population.

Senator DURBIN. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Van Hollen.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary, and thank you for your service.

I'm in favor of summit meetings between the President of the United States and foreign adversaries when it advances our interests. I'm opposed to the summit meetings when it simply provides a propaganda windfall to our adversaries. I have to say I think the jury is still out on what happened in the summit between President Trump and Kim Jong Un.

NORTH KOREA

What I do know is that there's a report in the Wall Street Journal today. The headline is "North Korea Is Rapidly Upgrading Nuclear Site Despite Summit Vow." I understand we'd probably have to deal with that in a classified setting. But that's a very troubling report. You would agree, would you not, Mr. Secretary, that North Korea poses a nuclear threat to the United States?

Secretary POMPEO. Oh, yes, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I just think it's important that the President not engage in, sort of, puffery on this, because after the summit meeting, as you well know, he sent out a tweet saying just the opposite. He said there's no longer a nuclear threat from North Korea. I just think we need to be very clear-eyed as to the past history of negotiations with North Korea. Would you agree?

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, absolutely, and to be clear-eyed, what the President intended there, I'm confident what he intended there was we did reduce the threat. I don't think there's any doubt about that. We took the tension level down. If I'd have been having this hearing several months ago, you all would have been demanding that we reduce the threat. How do I know? Well, I watched them from—

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I understand your interpretation of the President's—

Secretary POMPEO. So his point was—I think his point was a fair one. For the moment, we have reduced risk, and we're endeavoring to do that over a much—

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I understand your interpretation of what he said. What he tweeted was, quote, "There is no longer a nuclear threat from North Korea." That was his statement. He didn't say we've reduced the temperature, we've reduced tensions. I would point out that he reduced tensions from the point where he took them to a boiling point and brought them down. But I don't want to engage in that. I just wanted to get a clear statement from you that you did agree that North Korea poses a nuclear threat to the United States.

I want to follow up on a point that was raised and what the Chairman mentioned about President Xi and the Chinese and sanctions on North Korea, because in a press conference right after the summit, President Trump said that China was weakening its enforcement of the sanctions and then said, quote, "But that's okay," unquote, and went on to say, quote, "I think over the last 2 months, the border is more open than it was when we first started, but that is what it is."

Are we still pursuing a policy of maximum pressure on North Korea until we achieve our goals?

Secretary POMPEO. I'll try and answer this with two points. I think one of them—I responded to a question from Senator Graham. It is the case that we have observed China not enforcing control over their cross-border areas as vigorously as they were 6 or 12 months ago. It's important to note that comes from an all-time high, that is, they had been enforcing sanctions in a way that we had never seen them enforce them before, in spite of previous administrations' efforts to get them to do so. We were singularly effective in getting them to reach that level of enforcement. Their violations today—the things they're doing today don't violate U.N. Security Council resolutions, so they are still on-sides.

And then to your second point, it is the case that enforcement of existing sanctions remains an enormous priority of this administration. I say it a dozen times a day. No matter who walks into my office, from what country they are from, I've reminded them of the importance of doing that.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I'm glad to hear that placing maximum economic pressure on North Korea remains in place, and I agree, and I think on a bipartisan basis we supported that. In fact, Senator Toomey and I have a piece of legislation that would further increase those sanctions and reduce flexibility even further. We think that's an important message to send. But I do think it's very troubling that at that summit, it was discovered that China was reducing the level of sanctions they had in place before.

TURKEY

Let me ask you about Turkey. And, first, I know you agree that the Syrian Kurds have been a very important ally in our fight against ISIS, right?

Secretary POMPEO. They have. Yes, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And just give me your assurance that you're not going to be bullied by Turkey or President Erdoğan into throwing the Syrian Kurds under the bus.

Secretary POMPEO. There's no administration intention to hurl any large yellow objects whatsoever.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Let me ask you about the F-35s, because we've had a lot of testimony before the Congress from Defense officials, from the administration, and otherwise, that Turkey's acquisition of the Russian S-400s in combination with the F-35s would allow Russia to detect and expose potential vulnerabilities with the F-35, and that would present a national security threat.

I know you testified over in the House that you were, quote, "imploping," unquote, the Turks not to go forward. I think we want a more definitive statement. This subcommittee just passed last week legislation saying that it's one or the other. We want the Turks to get the F-35. But can you tell us today, Mr. Secretary, that we will not deliver the F-35s to Turkey until they pledge they won't acquire the S-400?

Secretary POMPEO. We've been very clear with the Turks about the risks associated with their acquisition of the S-400.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I don't know what you mean by risks. I think that they will only understand a very definitive statement. We sent them one. We sent them one, and I think it's important that the U.S. Government be on the same page. So I'm asking you to make a definitive statement, if not right now, which I think would be helpful, very quickly, because, as you know, there was the ceremony in Texas the same day the committee took the action here, and I think the more Turkey thinks that it can proceed down this path without a very firm absolute statement from the United States, the more this will drag out.

We just should end it and make it clear: "You have to choose. You're a NATO ally. You shouldn't be doing something that puts your fellow NATO allies at risk."

Secretary POMPEO. It's a very complex situation, Senator. We're certainly reviewing it. We've spoken with the Turks at great length. I spoke to my counterpart within the last handful of days. It's not just the F-35 and the S-400. The list is long. Pastor Brunson's return is paramount for us as well. I could go on with the challenges that we face. We are hopeful that the result of this

election will put us in a place where we can have a set of conversations that lead us to an outcome that I think would please everyone on this subcommittee.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate the fact that there's a long list. There is. What's happening in Syria with the Syrian Kurds is one. Pastor Brunson is another. But let's be really clear. Turkey has just unlawfully taken Pastor Brunson, and so I also would like your commitment that Pastor Brunson is not going to be used as a bargaining chip with Turkey for cooperation with the Turks, you know, in throwing the Syrian Kurds under the bus, or somehow we'll say, "Okay, you can go ahead and get the F-35s and the S-400s."

What they've done with Pastor Brunson is outrageous, and with the foreign nationals, by the way—

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, they—

Senator VAN HOLLEN [continuing]. Who have worked for our Embassy for years.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir. You have my commitment. These issues are separate.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary POMPEO. That's the best description. We are not linking those issues in any way.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We're just about done. You've done a marvelous job. Just a quick wrap-up here and I'll let Senator Leahy ask anything he would like.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE STAFFING

In terms of staffing, are you making progress?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, but not as rapidly as America needs us to.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, if there's anything we can do to help you, let us know.

NORTH KOREA

If North Korea is watching the hearing, and I hope you are, take the deal. It would be good for you. It would be good for everybody.

If diplomacy fails this time around—if you agree with me—we're running out of peaceful options.

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, I do, and I think at this point—I think the North Koreans appreciate that we are also serious about accomplishing the things that they've put on the table, the things that we've said we will do. The President made a commitment with respect to the senior level joint exercises. We now have paused one of the two annual major ones, Ulchi Freedom Guardian. We are following through on their commitments. It is our expectation that the North Koreans will begin to do that relatively quickly.

Senator GRAHAM. I'm okay with suspending exercises. You can always start them back. We train in other forms. I would not be okay with withdrawing our troops from South Korea, because I think they're a stabilizing force for the region, and I don't want China to take the wrong queue here. Do you agree with the idea that our troops in South Korea are stabilizing to the region?

Secretary POMPEO. I do. Yes, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. We will talk to you about an initiative I'm working on with Senators Coons and Leahy and others about the Sahel. It's a region in Africa that's falling apart. We're going to spend now or we're going to spend later, and I think there's an opportunity to get ahead of the problem. We're trying to do something with Gaza, because you just can't ignore that.

I thank you very much for what you're doing for our country.
Senator Leahy.

UNRWA

Senator LEAHY. We spoke briefly about this before, Mr. Secretary, and a number of us, Republicans and Democrats alike, met with King Abdullah of Jordan earlier today. He was concerned about the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Senator Graham was there, too.

Our normal annual contribution to UNRWA is between \$350 million and \$400 million. So far this year the administration has provided only \$60 million. UNRWA runs schools and health clinics and provides other basic services for Palestinians in Jordan, Lebanon, the West Bank, and Gaza. I know King Abdullah feels strongly that the alternative to UNRWA schools are schools run by Hamas, and if UNRWA closes down their schools, instead of seeing a blue flag flying, we'll probably see black or green flags.

What do we do about education for these kids? If we don't support UNRWA, what do we do?

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, when the king was here, I was present when he spoke with the President on this very issue as well. There were a couple of ideas about how the United States might, along with others, provide funding so that those schools open at the—I think it's the end of August—so those kids aren't doing something that we don't want them to do or we don't have the wrong folks underwriting it.

You know the challenges with UNRWA that have been, frankly, mismanaged and poorly led and corruption for quite some time. We are trying to find a mechanism by which we can achieve the two objectives you described, one, avoiding that challenge with UNRWA, and, second, making sure that those refugees that Jordan has agreed to take, those Palestinian children in Jordan, get a chance to go to school. I think we're getting closer. We're reviewing it. I think we're getting closer to a solution.

Senator LEAHY. Well, I have concerns there, and, of course, I have concerns in Lebanon, West Bank, Gaza, and so on. But in Jordan—if you look at the percentage of refugees they have—it dwarfs anything that the United States has done, with far less resources than we have. I hate to think what happens if these refugees have to go somewhere else, if the schools and medical facilities are provided somewhere else. We'd just light the fuse under a lot of them. You will find strong support on this subcommittee for the funding to do what is necessary. But the time is limited.

Finally, you have said you support the Leahy Law, and you will enforce it, and that you will pursue the necessary resources for that purpose. It's a law that the State Department uses to vet foreign individuals and units to determine if they are eligible for U.S. aid. This is one case where American taxpayers are rightly con-

cerned about aid going to a military unit or individuals in another country that, among other things, are raping young boys. It's not where we want to spend money. I appreciate you saying you will support it. Have all of our ambassadors been told they have to fully enforce the Leahy Law?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir. They are. It's part of their formal onboarding training processing.

Senator LEAHY. One U.S. ambassador said that the Leahy Law does not apply in the country where he is posted, so he doesn't have to look at if there are any violations. He would know we spent a great deal of money to help the police and military forces in that country. Is he correct?

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, I'm not familiar with the situation. If you'll identify it for me, I will look into it. That does not sound remotely consistent with what I described to you.

Senator LEAHY. I appreciate that, and as we leave here, I'll tell you exactly who the ambassador is.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, sir.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Very briefly.

WEST BANK AND GAZA

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Senator Leahy mentioned the UNRWA money. There's also the issue of some of the aid funding that had been previously allocated to the West Bank and Gaza, which, as I understand it, is being held up at the White House. I would appreciate it if you could maybe have a member of your team get back to us very quickly as to what the plan is on that.

Secretary POMPEO. I'd be happy to. You can clearly tell from the expression on my face I need to go find out exactly what the status is of that.

[The information follows:]

In 2018, the President directed a review of U.S. assistance to the Palestinian Authority and in the West Bank and Gaza to ensure these funds were being spent in accordance with U.S. national interests and were providing value to the U.S. taxpayer. As a result of that review, we redirected to other high-priority projects more than \$200 million in fiscal year 2017 Economic Support Funds originally planned for programs in the West Bank and Gaza.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I mean, it's making—you know, it's a very complicated situation, but it's making a very desperate situation even worse.

RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE IN U.S. ELECTIONS

The last thing I would just ask you to do, Mr. Secretary, regarding Russian interference in the elections—you've been very clear in previous testimony not only about the past interference, but what you project to be interference in the midterm elections. In the meeting they just had, or in the press conference they just had after National Security Advisor Bolton's meeting there, the Russian advisor at the Kremlin essentially said they had never interfered and they never will.

What I'd like to do is—I've introduced a piece of legislation, a bipartisan bill, with Senator Rubio called the Deter Act, and the idea is not just to try to deal with it after the fact, but put in place some very clear disincentives that would automatically be triggered if we have a finding of interference in the 2018—your team has looked at it, and they think it's a little harsh in terms of the potential consequences. We'd really like your feedback as to what you think would be workable and achieve the deterrent impact, because it's easier to try to prevent the Russians from interfering in the first place than having to spend an awful—we have to defend ourselves no matter what, but we should also have a first line of defense, and that's deterrence.

Secretary POMPEO. Senator, I agree. I'll take a look at it. I'll take a personal—I haven't had a chance to see it. But we will provide you the feedback to that legislation substantively as detailed as we can provide. We'll give you our real thoughts.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

[The information follows:]

The sanctions proposed under the DETER Act would pose challenges to implement, and could have broad unintended consequences to U.S. business interests, European and Asian allies, as well as other partners. The administration is available to further discuss the implication of this legislation with the Appropriations Subcommittee.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Senator GRAHAM. I would ask the subcommittee members to submit any questions for the record no later than this Friday, June 29, by 2:00 p.m.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Department for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO HON. MICHAEL POMPEO

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MITCH MCCONNELL

Question. I have heard from a number of constituents concerned about the recent changes to the intercountry adoption accreditation fee schedule. Will you please share how the Department of State intends to assist U.S. adoptive families and adoption service providers with questions related to the implementation of the new accreditation fee schedule?

Answer. The Department approved the fee schedule proposed by Intercountry Adoption Accreditation Monitoring Entity (IAAME) because it complies with relevant regulations to facilitate an equitable fee distribution across all adoption service providers, according to size and number of cases, and reflects the need for increased focus in the area of monitoring and oversight.

The Department has made a concerted effort to inform, anticipate, and explain the fees, their purpose, and structure to the public, including: having one-on-one interactions with all adoption service providers and advocacy groups; holding a series of conference calls in which providers could address their concerns directly to the accrediting entity; and providing comprehensive written materials about the new fees, their purpose, and benefits for families.

Question. How does the Department of State intend to implement these changes and improve intercountry adoption monitoring and oversight while helping ensure intercountry adoption remains as affordable as possible for American families?

Answer. The Department is sensitive to any increase in fees paid by prospective adoptive parents and expects efforts focused on monitoring and oversight will provide greater stability and financial protection to families. Such efforts include reviews of Adoption Service Provider (ASP) financial solvency, monitoring their use of fees, and enforcement of the requirement that ASPs refund fees for services not

rendered. This ensures that, after having paid substantial fees to an ASP, prospective parents and prospective adoptees are not left stranded in the middle of an adoption by an ASP that goes out of business.

Question. In April, the Senate Judiciary Committee hosted a hearing on International Parental Child Abduction, and the U.S. Senate passed a resolution recognizing April 2018 as International Parental Child Abduction Month to bring awareness to the harm caused by this issue. Will you please provide an update on the Department of State's efforts to help prevent International Parental Child Abduction and actions the Department has taken to assist families experiencing this issue?

Answer. The Office of Children's Issues Prevention Team works hard to prevent International Parental Child Abduction (IPCA) and protect children from its harmful effects. Through our Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program (CPIAP), concerned parents or custodians can work with the State Department to ensure that parental consent requirements are met when a passport application is received for an enrolled child. The Department also coordinates with CBP and other Federal agencies on CBP's Prevent Abduction Program, which aims to prevent a child's removal from the United States in violation of court-ordered travel restrictions. Since the April hearing, CBP has taken steps to provide more robust information about the Prevent Abduction program on its website, and the Department's Prevention website now links to this information. Going forward, we will continue to work across the U.S. Government to identify additional ways to prevent IPCA from occurring in the first place and assist families when it does happen.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR PATRICK J. LEAHY

Question. Egypt's President el Sisi has labeled anyone affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist and has locked them up for years without trial, he has cracked down on civil society, and he has pursued a strategy in the Sinai that has made the situation worse. Arbitrary arrests, torture, and indefinite detention are common in Egypt. When there are trials, they make a mockery of international standards of fairness. We have repeatedly raised these concerns with Egyptian officials, to no avail. The administration has withheld a portion of the \$1.3 billion in military aid, and I support that decision. After years of discussions, we have finally seen progress on the cases involving the arrests of employees of U.S. NGOs. Have you discussed these other concerns with President el Sisi, and if so what was his response?

Answer. Though I have yet to meet personally with President al-Sisi in my role as Secretary of State, the administration has worked to advance our strategic partnership while emphasizing respect for and protection of basic rights and freedoms. We remain concerned by Egypt's repression of nonviolent opposition, the limited space for civil society, and restrictions on the peaceful expression of dissent. The Department of State has raised and will continue to raise our serious concerns about these issues with senior Egyptian Government officials and has stressed the fundamental importance of the respect for human rights and a robust civil society for Egyptian stability and prosperity.

Question. How is the decision to drastically reduce the number of refugees we admit into this country a reflection of our values? What values were you referring to?

Answer. The President authorized the admission of up to 45,000 refugees in fiscal year 2018. Over the last year and a half, U.S. Government agencies have worked to strengthen the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program's security measures. While necessary to improve national security and public safety, these reviews and enhancements have lengthened processing times for some cases thus initially slowing the rate of admissions. In addition, the United States is focusing resources on the domestic asylum backlog, which is over 300,000 cases and growing. Nevertheless, the United States continues to prioritize the resettlement of the world's most vulnerable refugees. We work closely with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and other partners to identify the refugees at greatest risk and in most need of resettlement in a third country.

Question. Like it or not, and regardless of what the White House may think causes it, the Earth's climate is changing. However, the President walked away from the Paris Agreement. During your confirmation hearing you testified that you would "make sure that the United States demonstrates leadership on climate issues internationally." How do you plan to do that? b. Has the administration proposed an alternative to the Paris Agreement, and if so what does it consist of and what funds are being devoted to it?

Answer. As I noted at my confirmation hearing, I will make sure that the United States demonstrates leadership on climate change issues internationally to protect and advance the interests of the United States, including by promoting innovation and market-friendly solutions that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience. I will make sure that we do so in a manner that is fair to the United States and that does not burden the U.S. economy. I will also ensure that the United States is actively engaged in multilateral bodies, as well as directly through our diplomatic and development activities with other countries. As the President has stated, the United States intends to withdraw from the Paris Agreement unless we can identify terms for reengagement that are more favorable to the American people. The United States is continuing to participate in international climate change negotiations—including those related to implementation guidance for the Paris Agreement—to protect U.S. interests and ensure all future policy options remain open to the President. I look forward to working with the President and with foreign counterparts on a way forward on this issue that is consistent with U.S. interests and available resources.

Question. Do you support helping countries adapt to, or mitigate the effects of, climate change—like rising sea levels, warming temperatures, water shortages, the dependence on fossil fuels? If so, how much is in the fiscal year 2019 budget request for that support?

Answer. I support helping countries promote access to affordable, sustainable energy that also promotes a clean and healthy environment through continued bilateral engagement and cooperation, including by promoting innovation and market-friendly solutions that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience.

While the United States will continue to engage internationally on climate change issues to protect U.S. energy security and economic interests and to achieve a level playing field, the fiscal year 2019 budget proposes to wind down existing State Department and USAID bilateral programs intended primarily to help other countries mitigate the impacts of climate change. The budget continues support for developing countries' efforts to improve affordable and reliable energy access, agricultural and economic resilience, and natural resource use and management, where mutually beneficial to our broader foreign policy, economic development, and national security objectives.

Question. This Friday, the International Organization for Migration, comprised of 169 member governments, is scheduled to elect its new director general. Bill Swing, the outgoing director general, is a good friend and one of our most experienced and respected diplomats. The Trump administration has nominated Ken Isaacs, who has a long record of anti-Muslim statements. He has repeatedly posted statements online reflecting the view that Islam is a religion that is inherently violent and inextricably linked to terrorism. For example, in a June 2017 tweet, he commented on a CNN International report quoting the bishop of Southwark Cathedral in London after terrorists killed eight people in that city. According to CNN, the bishop stated that the attack and the killings were "not what the Muslim faith asks people to do." Isaacs responded, "Bishop, if you read the Quran you will know 'this' is exactly what the Muslim faith instructs the faithful to do." In Twitter replies to expressions of sorrow about the 2016 Orlando nightclub terrorist attack, he simply tweeted the hashtag #Islam. This may be in line with comments President Trump has made about Muslims, but if Mr. Isaacs were saying these things about Christians, Jews, or other religions I seriously doubt that he would have been nominated for this position. Do you support his candidacy?

Answer. As I shared in a letter with every International Organization for Migration (IOM) member state in early June, I believe Ken Isaacs had the vision and experience to advance IOM's mission to serve people with human dignity and member states as they work to strengthen safe, orderly, and legal migration systems. Mr. Isaacs has over 34 years of proven leadership and operational experience serving the world's most vulnerable people no matter their race or religion. Mr. Isaacs demonstrated an ability to collaborate effectively with governments and leaders around the world to address some of the world's pressing challenges in migration.

Question. A few weeks ago, Saudi authorities accused seven recently imprisoned women's activists and others associated with the women's rights movement of serious crimes. Pro-government newspapers and social media called the activists "traitors." At least four other women's rights defenders have been arrested since May 15, bringing the total number of detainees to at least 11. When the Crown Prince was here, the State Department announced a \$1 billion arms sale to Saudi Arabia. Have you urged the Crown Prince to release these women's rights activists, and if so what was his response?

Answer. The Department has maintained a complex, multi-faceted relationship with Saudi Arabia as a key regional partner in advancing and protecting the inter-

ests of the United States in the Middle East. We follow very closely the detention of these activists, many of whom have campaigned for the reforms the Saudi Government is now initiating. Human rights are part of the Department's conversations with the Saudis, and the arrests of activists are raised at all levels. We continue to raise concerns on limitations to freedom of expression, association, and assembly and continue to urge Saudi Arabia to protect fair trial guarantees and transparency and to emphasize the importance of allowing space for civil society.

Question. President Trump has repeatedly said that he was presented with a proposal to spend \$1 billion for the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, which he rejected, and by doing so he saved the taxpayers more than \$999 million because it will only cost \$200,000 or \$300,000. The administration has already notified the Committee that it intends to spend \$55 million over the next few years and has requested hundreds of millions more for a new Embassy in Jerusalem, while it finalizes plans for its location and construction. Knowing how much an Embassy like that, with all the security requirements, is likely to cost, was the President being straight with the taxpayers? Would it be more honest to say that the new Embassy is going to cost a lot more than \$200,000? In fact a lot more than \$200 million?

Answer. The President's statement was clear that the \$250,000 was for an interim Embassy facility, which was inaugurated on May 14. The next phase of the construction is an expansion of the interim facility, estimated at \$55 million. The final stage will be a permanent facility. At this time, the Department is exploring all options and locations for a final facility and the requirements therein. Without the location and requirements, it is premature to estimate a cost.

Question. U.S. Ambassador David Friedman has said: "I don't believe the settlements are illegal." Do you agree with him? What is this administration's position on Israeli settlements in the West Bank?

Answer. The administration has stated that while the existence of settlements is not in itself an impediment to peace, further unrestrained settlement activity does not help advance peace. The Israeli Government has made clear that, going forward, its intent is to adopt a policy regarding settlement activity that takes the President's concerns into consideration. We welcome this. We remain committed to facilitating an enduring and comprehensive peace between Israel and the Palestinians. We remain hard at work on a peace plan that will benefit both parties. That plan will be unveiled when the time is right.

Question. In earlier testimony, you said that other countries need to devote greater resources toward common objectives, and you have said that our funding should be proportional. Yet you have also said, when questioned about funding cuts, that it is not about dollars, it is about "outcomes". So, which is it? We agree that dollars are not the only measure of success, but there are costs associated with buying vaccines, supporting foreign police forces, protecting our diplomats, and investing in development overseas, and those costs are increasing. How do you measure proportionality when it involves protecting U.S. interests overseas?

Answer. The fiscal year 2019 budget request for the State Department and USAID of \$39.3 billion supports the administration's priorities and goals as set forth in the National Security Strategy and the State Department/USAID Joint Strategic Plan. We are working hard to achieve these goals and desired foreign policy outcomes. At the same time, other donor countries must do more to contribute their fair share toward meeting global challenges and our shared goals. The United States can no longer bear the majority of this burden.

Question. On Syria, it seems that the administration's strategy has been whittled down to defeating ISIS and getting out. Is there more to it than that, and what is the status of the review of aid to help stabilize Syria that has held up \$200 million and left our partners in the country wondering if they can count on us?

Answer. Our priorities in Syria are defeating ISIS and other terrorist groups, ensuring the end of chemical weapons use in Syria, protecting Syria's neighbors, diminishing Iran's influence, de-escalating the Syrian conflict, and lessening civilian suffering resulting from the humanitarian crisis to create the necessary space for a political settlement to the conflict. In line with the President's request to review all bilateral foreign assistance for Syria, we continually reevaluate stabilization assistance levels and how best they might be used. The United States continues to work with the international community, members of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and our partners on the ground to provide stabilization support.

Question. There was talk when Rex Tillerson had your job of moving part of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to USAID. Others suggested that part of it should be moved to the Department of Homeland Security. Both proposals concerned a lot of people, including on this Committee. Can we assume that is not going to happen—that the personnel, functions, and budget of PRM will stay where they are?

Answer. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, which manages U.S. refugee policy, assistance, and resettlement, is an integral part of State's foreign policy efforts to prevent and respond to crises and conflict and promote regional stability. As part of Executive Order 13781, the administration is in the process of reviewing agencies throughout the executive branch in pursuit of increased efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. In response to Executive Order 13781, the Department of State is working with USAID to optimize our overall humanitarian assistance efforts.

Question. During your confirmation, when asked if you believe that a woman who is pregnant as a result of rape should have the right to obtain a safe abortion, you said you "will support the administration's efforts to combat gender-based violence and support the maternal health and family planning needs of women around the world." Since that did not answer the question, let me be more specific: we know that rape is often used as a weapon of war. If a girl is raped by a member of ISIS, or the Taliban, or the Burmese army, would the administration's policy force her to give birth, or would it support her right to a safe abortion in a country where abortion is legal—as it is in this country?

Answer. The Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) policy aims to ensure that U.S. taxpayer funding does not support foreign non-governmental organizations that provide or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning. The policy does not apply with respect to cases of rape, incest, or endangerment of the life of the mother.

Question. Every year, the Department of Defense gets more into the business of foreign aid. Officials at DoD say that since the State Department does not have enough money, DoD needs to do it: police training, counternarcotics, building schools, you name it. The results have often fallen short, as the Inspectors General and GAO have documented, because this is not what DoD does best. Secretary Mattis has called for a bigger budget for diplomacy and development. How do you reconcile this, when the President wants to cut the budget for diplomacy and development by more than 23 percent?

Answer. Development and diplomacy play an indispensable role in securing peace and security, promoting prosperity, expanding American influence, and addressing global crises. The State Department and USAID's efforts in these areas contribute to a more secure and prosperous world by helping to enhance the stability and resilience of our partners around the world, which in turn promotes their economic development.

The State Department and USAID's fiscal year 2019 budget request is designed with the goal of maximizing the efficiency of our foreign assistance operations consistent with furthering U.S. national interests. By focusing our efforts, we will be able to quickly and effectively target and address the most pressing challenges and threats to our national security. The State Department will continue to coordinate with the Department of Defense, including through the Security Sector Assistance Steering Committee, and provide direction through legislation calling for State Department concurrence in the use of the Department of Defense's assistance authorities to ensure an integrated and comprehensive approach in all U.S. foreign assistance and in order to best leverage resources and authorities to advance national security priorities and partnerships.

Question. United States support for Central America is episodic. It ebbs and flows. Usually it ebbs. The Alliance for Prosperity is the latest initiative. Over the past 3 years we have provided more than \$2 billion, and we are starting year four. We know these countries are struggling with complex and very difficult problems that will take many years to solve. But despite the positive rhetoric by officials in these countries we do not see the necessary commitment to combat corruption, end impunity, and stop the attacks against civil society and the manipulation of the judiciary and the electoral process by those in power. In other words, what we see for the most part is more of the same. How do you see the current situation, and if things continue the way they are what results should we expect in 3 to 5 years?

Answer. Our diplomatic engagement, close partnership with Central America, and the political will of government leaders in the region allow us to advance our security, governance, and economic prosperity objectives. Overcoming the challenges in the region will take years of sustained effort, though we are beginning to see progress in the professional capability of institutions, reduced homicide rates, and improved coordinated approaches in communities from which we see out-bound migration. Over the next three to 5 years, our programming will support broader, long-term efforts to increase transparency, stimulate economic growth, reduce and prevent violence, and combat trafficking and its destabilizing impacts on the region.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. Is a secure, stable, and improving Central America in our national interests? Do you support robust foreign assistance funding for Central America, both now and over the long-term, to help reduce in the region the various incentives for northward migration?

Answer. The security and prosperity of Central America is a key to regional stability and to the security of the United States. U.S. assistance under our Strategy for Central America aims to secure U.S. borders and protect American citizens by addressing the economic, security, and governance drivers of illegal immigration and illicit trafficking through Central America to the United States. Funding supports short-, mid-, and long-term efforts to address systemic challenges in Central America. Short-term efforts seek to address immediate security challenges. Long-term programming seeks to discourage illegal migration by addressing the need for improved rule of law and economic growth in Central America, coupled with sustainable security and border security enhancement. Addressing these challenges requires robust diplomatic engagement and funding from the United States, sustained progress from the Central American governments, and continued support by international partners and institutions, civil society, and the private sector.

Question. What is the State Department currently doing to help Central American nations to secure and stabilize their situation?

Answer. Our engagement in all Central American countries aims to dismantle transnational criminal organizations, combat drug trafficking, halt illegal immigration, and promote sustainable economic growth by improving security, combatting impunity, and increasing economic opportunity. The Department is providing more than \$2.6 billion in foreign assistance to Central America in fiscal years 2015–2018. Overcoming the challenges in Central America will take years of sustained assistance and diplomatic effort, but we are seeing progress.

Question. How would you judge the effectiveness of the U.S. Strategy for Central America? What metrics is the State Department using for the U.S. Strategy for Central America?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that the U.S. taxpayer sees the results of our international aid. The Department measures and evaluates performance of all foreign assistance programs it oversees, employing a comprehensive, interagency results architecture for all seven Central American countries and all three pillars of the U.S. Strategy for Central America. USAID and other interagency partners actively participate in collecting the data required for evaluation, measuring progress in security, prosperity, and governance programs. Our evaluation includes strategic objectives for each pillar of the Strategy as well as common baseline indicators and targets against which we measure progress over time.

In accordance with requirements accompanying the fiscal year 2018 appropriation for Central America, the Department submitted a progress report based on this plan for monitoring and evaluation on May 16. It is available on USAID and Department public websites. This initial report shows that, in general, we are meeting our programmatic targets, but that after only one fiscal year of tracking the results data, we have yet to see significant, national-level success across all seven countries.

Question. What does success look like?

Answer. The goals of the U.S. Strategy for Central America are to reduce insecurity and violence, enhance economic opportunity, and fight impunity and corruption in Central America to address the drivers of illegal immigration and disrupt transnational criminal organizations. In the short-term, we are scaling up programs that have an immediate impact on conditions driving illegal immigration to the United States, as well as efforts to build the capacity of Central American governments. In the medium-term, we will support programs designed for broader impact to increase transparency, stimulate economic growth, reduce and prevent violence, and combat trafficking.

Question. What is the administration doing to promote democracy and human rights in Nicaragua? Does the administration need more resources or legislative action to prevent Nicaragua from sliding deeper into tyranny, like Cuba and Venezuela?

Answer. Congress directed \$10 million of fiscal year 2018 and \$9.5 million of fiscal year 2017 Development Assistance funds to Nicaragua for democracy and governance programs. Since the onset of Nicaraguan government-instigated violence and repression in April, USAID and Department programs have focused on responding to needs on the ground, such as ongoing support for human rights and democracy activists as well as independent journalists. I look forward to working with Congress to continue providing assistance that supports U.S. goals and interests in Nicaragua consistent with any applicable restrictions. We are also actively revoking visas of

those who are committing the human rights abuses, pursuing additional sanctions, and will take additional steps as warranted by events on the ground.

Question. Do you believe the current negotiations will lead to early elections?

Answer. The Nicaraguan government-instigated attacks and threats against peaceful protestors and the general population are unacceptable and must cease. An end to violence is foremost among the conditions necessary to resume good faith negotiations for a democratic and peaceful path forward for all Nicaraguans. I support the Nicaraguan Catholic Bishops' Conference commitment to advance the National Dialogue, which includes a proposal for early elections, to further negotiations to resolve the ongoing crisis. I encourage all parties to work together to resolve the current crisis in a way that respects human rights and the rule of law and provides for early, free, and fair elections.

Question. Are Chinese telecoms like ZTE and Huawei—including the role that they and other Chinese state-directed telecommunications companies play in advancing China's espionage and intellectual property theft—a national security issue? Does the operation of Chinese state-directed telecommunications firms in the United States constitute a direct threat to our national security?

Answer. Although state ownership or control does not, standing alone, necessarily pose a threat to U.S. national security and law enforcement interests, some foreign-government controlled companies' activities may pose unacceptable risks to U.S. national security and law enforcement. The State Department—along with interagency partners—is working to strengthen the U.S. telecommunication infrastructure to ensure that it is secure and that our intellectual property is protected. There is an interagency process to advise the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on foreign companies' requests to access the U.S. telecommunications market. For example, the State Department participated in the interagency process that recommended to the FCC on July 2 to deny a China Mobile license application to provide international voice traffic between the United States and foreign countries as a common carrier due to substantial and unacceptable national security and law enforcement risks. We will continue to work with Congress and interagency partners to safeguard our telecommunications infrastructure.

Question. Does the State Department or USAID use any telecommunications equipment from Huawei or ZTE, including 'white-labeled' equipment that was produced by Chinese telecoms but has a different company's name on it?

Answer. Huawei and ZTE devices are not authorized for use in the State Department's mobile program.

Question. How many U.S. Government employees in China has the State Department confirmed as suffering symptoms consistent with the so-called "Havana Syndrome" attacks suffered by U.S. Government employees in Cuba? How many non-U.S. Government employees, if any, have suffered such symptoms in China?

Answer. To date, there is one U.S. Government employee stationed in China who has been medically confirmed to have symptoms consistent with those seen in patients from Embassy Havana. The Department is not aware of any medically confirmed non-U.S. Government employee cases.

Question. How is the State Department investigating the incident(s) in China? Is what's happening in China connected in any way to the attacks in Cuba?

Answer. On May 23, I asked Deputy Secretary Sullivan to establish and lead an interagency task force to look into these incidents. Deputy Secretary Sullivan continues to lead the task force, which focuses on identifying and treating affected personnel and family members, investigating the incidents, and messaging, including diplomatic outreach. While the medically confirmed symptoms of our patient in Guangzhou are medically similar to those experienced by our staff in Havana, we do not know the cause of the symptoms in Havana or China. We are continuing to investigate in both places.

Question. How does the Chinese Government's response compare to the Cuban Government's response? Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. At this point, the magnitude, scope, consistency, and time period of incidents reported in China and Cuba are different. The Chinese Government has repeatedly assured senior Department officials in Washington and in Beijing that they are investigating the circumstances surrounding the one medically confirmed case and taking appropriate measures to protect our personnel and their family members.

Question. After the State Department recently informed Congress about the 26th injured U.S. Government employee from U.S. Embassy Havana, what is the status of the Embassy? And what is the Cuban Government telling you about the most recent attack?

Answer. Embassy Havana remains on unaccompanied status. The Cuban Government continues to state that it will abide by its responsibilities under the Vienna

Convention to take adequate steps to protect our personnel. The Cuban Government informs us that it continues its investigation; however, to date it has not yielded any substantive results.

Question. As the United States seeks full snapback of suspending sanctions against Iran, do you support efforts to persuade the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) once again to disconnect the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and other designated Iranian banks from SWIFT's financial messaging services?

Answer. Yes. The re-imposition of sanctions on Iran has one primary goal: to place maximum economic pressure on the Iranian regime to encourage them to return to the negotiating table. Eliminating Iran's access to the international financial system will not only increase this economic pressure but also deprive the regime of funds used to support its malign activities throughout the region. We intend to work with our allies and partners to end Iran's use of SWIFT and any other specialized financial messaging systems in an effort to isolate Iran economically.

Question. How are you emphasizing to foreign governments our Nation's expectation that all governments should comply with sanctions against Iran, including secondary sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran, the significant oil reduction requirement, and de-SWIFTing CBI and other designated Iranian banks?

Answer. The Department of State is working diligently to counter the totality of Iran's malign activity. We have an aggressive diplomatic engagement strategy in support of our Iran policy, and we are pursuing a campaign of maximum economic pressure on Iran. Our teams of diplomats and specialists are meeting with partners around the globe to discuss specific concerns with the plan for re-imposition of U.S. nuclear-related sanctions and next steps in Iran policy. Teams have already traveled to multiple stops in Europe and Asia to garner support for our global effort to pressure Iran and to explain our sanctions policy. We are fully engaged at all levels, and our diplomatic outreach will expand in the coming weeks.

Question. Have you pressed the Saudi Government to allow greater reforms on human rights, including the release of political prisoners who are wrongly detained in Saudi Arabia, and the reversal of practices aimed at stifling dissent and criticism? If not, would you be willing to do so?

Answer. The Department of State continues to engage with Saudi Arabian Government officials at all levels on human rights in the Kingdom. We continue to emphasize the importance of allowing space for civil society and free expression. We are following very closely the detention of civil society actors. Human rights issues are part of the Department of State's conversation with the Saudi Government, and the arrests are raised in these discussions. I will continue to raise this issue on a regular basis.

Question. Have you, in specific, raised with the Saudi Government the case of jailed activist and blogger Raif Badawi? If not, would you be willing to do so?

Answer. The Department of State has frequently engaged with the Saudi Arabian Government on the case of the detained activist and blogger Raif Badawi. We continue to call on Saudi authorities to review Mr. Badawi's case and his sentence. The Department of State regularly raises concerns about restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, fair trial guarantees, and other human rights issues with Saudi authorities at all levels. I will continue to urge the Saudi Arabian Government to ensure transparency in the investigation and trial process and to allow space for civil society.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CINDY HYDE-SMITH

Question. The fiscal year 2018 Omnibus provided \$5,000,000 for programs to promote accountability in Iraq and Syria for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Can you give an update on the spend plan for this account?

Answer. The Department is in the process of finalizing funding allocations, which will include the \$5 million to promote accountability in Iraq and Syria for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Once funding allocations have been finalized, these funds will be approved and pre-obligation requirements—such as Congressional notifications—met before the funds are implemented for the purposes directed.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Secretary Pompeo, I was very glad when you announced that you would lift the freeze on hiring and promotions at the State Department that was instituted by your predecessor. And yet, we continue to hear from within the Department that

the freeze has not been fully lifted, while at the same time political appointees are reportedly vetting career Foreign Service and civil service employees based on their perceived political leanings. Can you clarify for the Committee as to whether or not you have lifted the personnel freeze that was previously in place, as well as whether you intend to fill the openings left by this misguided personnel policy?

Answer. I lifted the hiring freeze on Foreign Service and Civil Service employment on May 15. This ended the 8 percent workforce reduction plan previously in place and authorized hiring to December 31, 2017 staffing levels as provided by Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018—Statement of Managers.

The Department's current hiring plans, once fully executed, will provide for growth in both the Foreign and Civil Service workforces beyond that which existed on December 31, 2017. The congressionally-directed hiring for the Foreign Service allows the Department to hire at "pre-fiscal year 2017 levels," and we have already planned entry classes for the remainder of the year to reach these targets. Bureaus have been authorized Civil Service employment ceilings based on the same hiring logic as the Foreign Service. In total, our plan brings us 454 employees above the December 31, 2017 level.

Committee staff have been and will continue to be briefed by Department officials on the detailed plans that the Department has developed to meet the Congressional goals.

Question. This Committee has advanced legislation that would require you to hire personnel to fill the ranks of the State Department to 2016 levels. Do you disagree with that personnel target?

Answer. At my direction, the Department has developed, and is in the process of executing, Foreign and Civil Service hiring plans that are based on the Congressional guidance and funding levels in the Consolidated Appropriation, 2018. For the Foreign Service, intake classes have been structured to coincide with "the pre-fiscal year 2017 rate" as included in the Appropriation's Statement of Managers. Similarly, Civil Service hiring targets have been established for each Bureau based on similar targets as specified in the Act for the Foreign Service. Committee staff have been briefed by the Department on the detailed plans to meet the Congressional intent of the Act.

Question. What is your response to allegations, which seem to have been substantiated by leaked emails sent by political appointees at the State Department, that career State Department employees are being vetted based on their perceived political leanings?

Answer. The Department has referred allegations of political reprisal against its career employees to the Department's Office of the Inspector General and the U.S. Office of Special Counsel. The Department is fully cooperating with those investigations and will take the appropriate action following the conclusions of those investigations.

Question. Secretary Pompeo, as you know well, the State Department is withholding \$200 million in stabilization funding for areas of Syria previously controlled by ISIS. This funding is for stabilization projects, which includes clearing mines and other explosives, removing rubble, repairing basic infrastructure and doing other things necessary to allow for the return of Syrian civilians displaced by fighting. I am struggling to see the logic in withholding this money after the U.S. has invested so much time and effort into pushing ISIS out of Syrian cities and towns. Why do you think it is prudent to withhold this funding at this time?

Answer. The President has asked that all bilateral foreign assistance for Syria stabilization efforts be reviewed in order to determine appropriate assistance needs and then encourage our partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS to share the burden of consolidating the Coalition's military gains and preventing the resurgence of ISIS. The Department of State and USAID continue to work with the international community, members of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and our partners on the ground to provide much-needed stabilization support to communities liberated from ISIS in Syria.

Question. Up to now, the administration has said that it is opposed to any actions that might further exacerbate the humanitarian catastrophe that is Yemen. Realistically, can we really expect the Saudi-coalition to undertake a massive urban assault to take Hodeidah without killing civilians and damaging critical infrastructure?

Answer. The administration is monitoring the situation in Hudaydah closely. We continue to stress to our foreign partners the need to avoid any action that damages infrastructure, exacerbates Yemen's humanitarian crisis, or disrupts the flow of humanitarian assistance and commercial goods through Hudaydah port. I have spoken to Emirati leaders and made clear this administration's desire to address their security concerns while preserving the free flow of humanitarian aid and commercial

goods to reach the Yemeni people who desperately need it. The administration continues to stress that all parties must prioritize the U.N. Special Envoy's efforts to revive political negotiations.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER A. COONS

Question. How is the administration's decision to freeze funding for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and Economic Support Funds to the West Bank and Gaza supporting American interests and values in the Middle East?

Answer. The administration routinely conducts reviews of foreign assistance in order to ensure it is meeting our national security interests, achieving our policy objectives, and providing value to U.S. taxpayers. The Department of State will brief Congress on the conclusions of the review once decisions are made. We have long voiced the need for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to seek out new voluntary funding streams and increase burden-sharing among its donors. We have also consistently called on UNRWA to undertake more fundamental reforms that will put it on more sustainable financial footing. It is essential that we create a fairer, more equitable, and more predictable funding mechanism for UNRWA.

Question. While UNRWA is not without faults, how does the administration intend to support programs aimed at Palestinians facing humanitarian crises and other legitimate needs?

Answer. U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), remains under review; no decision has yet been reached. On March 13, the White House hosted a conference on Gaza with representatives from 20 countries, including Israel and many Arab states. Participants discussed a series of concrete proposals and projects that would address the urgent challenges faced by Palestinians in Gaza, including chronic shortages of electricity and water. The United States will continue to work with our partners to find ways to improve the lives of the people of Gaza.

Question. Do government leaders in Jordan and Lebanon support this decision to freeze UNRWA funding?

Answer. Government leaders in Jordan and Lebanon have publicly expressed the need for the international community to continue funding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The administration is in regular consultation with our regional partners, including Jordan and Lebanon, and will continue to seek their views as we review our assistance to UNRWA and the Palestinians. The Department of State will brief Congress on the conclusions of the review, once decisions are reached.

Question. When does the administration plan to release this funding?

Answer. U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), remains under review; no decision has yet been reached. The administration routinely conducts reviews of foreign assistance in order to ensure it is meeting our national security interests, achieving our policy objectives, and providing value to U.S. taxpayers. The Department of State will brief Congress on the conclusions of the review, once decisions are reached.

Question. Will you commit to keeping this committee up to date on administration decisions regarding funding for humanitarian programs, people-to-people programming, and other programs permitted under U.S. law before the end of the fiscal year?

Answer. The Department of State will brief Congress on the conclusions of the review once decisions are reached.

Question. Does the United States plan to revive the former resettlement agreement between UNHCR and the Government of Israel to resettle 16,000 Eritrean and Sudanese refugees currently in Israel?

Answer. According to a public statement by Prime Minister Netanyahu on April 3, the Government of Israel cancelled a bilateral agreement with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that had established a Framework for Cooperation between Israel and UNHCR to promote durable solutions for approximately 39,000 Eritreans and Sudanese migrants currently living in Israel. We are not aware of any current agreement between UNHCR and the Israeli government related to African migrants in Israel.

Question. If so, what is the administration's position on whether or not the United States will support Israel by resettling some of the refugees?

Answer. The United States resettled 175 refugees via Israel in fiscal year 2017, primarily Eritreans. The fiscal year 2018 Presidential Determination on refugee re-

settlement set a ceiling on admission of 45,000 refugees. In fiscal year 2018, the United States has resettled 89 individuals coming from Israel as of July 3. We continue to accept referrals from UNHCR and anticipate doing so in the future.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

Question. Do you believe a political appointee who reassigns, categorizes or otherwise vets civil servants, based on perceived political affiliation, should work at the State Department?

Answer. Career Civil Service and Foreign Service employees are protected under law from being treated differently due to their real or perceived political affiliation. The Department is committed to adhering to the merit systems principles in its recruitment and employment practices. Such prohibited personnel actions are not tolerated at the State Department.

Question. Will you remove political appointees from the State Department found to have reassigned, categorized or vetted civil servants based on perceived political affiliation?

Answer. The Department has referred allegations of political reprisal against its career employees to the Department's Office of the Inspector General and the U.S. Office of Special Counsel. The Department is fully cooperating with those investigations and will take the appropriate action following the conclusions of those investigations.

Question. Please provide an explanation of the decisions to reassign Sahar Nowrouzzadeh, Lawrence Bartlett, and Ian Moss.

Answer. In general, the Department does not comment on personnel matters involving individual employees. With regard to Mr. Bartlett, we shared information about his current assignment in a letter dated June 22, 2018.

Question. Please provide all documents and communications regarding proposed or actual personnel actions for Sahar Nowrouzzadeh, Lawrence Bartlett, and Ian Moss.

Answer. In general, the Department does not comment on personnel matters involving individual employees.

Question. Does the Chinese Government exercise significant control over its telecommunications firms, and do Zhongxing Telecommunication Equipment Corporation (ZTE) and Huawei both have longstanding ties to the Chinese Government?

Answer. Media and other reporting suggests that the Chinese Government has ties to Chinese telecommunications firms, including the firms you have noted.

Question. You recently said that China is, "the most predatory economic government that operates against the rest of the world today." Has the Chinese Government substantially reduced intellectual property theft or other predatory Chinese behavior in the past year?

Answer. At the direction of the President, the Department is working with inter-agency partners to rebalance the U.S.-China trade relationship and achieve more fair and reciprocal trade between our two countries. This effort includes protecting U.S. technology and intellectual property from China's discriminatory and burdensome trade practices. Under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, the United States will take responsive actions. These include pursuing WTO dispute settlement to address discriminatory intellectual property licensing processes adopted by China and imposing tariffs on goods imported from China containing industrially significant technology, including those related to the "Made in China 2025" program. U.S. stakeholders continue to express concerns to us regarding China's intellectual property practices and unfair economic policies. The appropriate response from China should be to change its behavior, which China has pledged to do many times but has not done to date.

Question. This January, in your capacity as CIA director, you said you had "every expectation" that Russia would interfere in future US elections, and that you had not "seen a significant decrease in their activity." In testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in May, you said that the administration "will not tolerate" Russian interference in U.S. elections," but also that the United States has not been able to achieve "effective deterrence" against the Russians and has "more work to do." Do you maintain that Russia will interfere in future U.S. elections, including midterms in November?

Answer. The evidence clearly shows Russia sought to interfere in our 2016 elections. Their objective was to erode faith in U.S. democratic institutions, sow doubt about the integrity of our electoral process, and undermine confidence in the institutions of the U.S. Government. There will be serious consequences should Russia attempt to interfere in our electoral processes again.

The Department of State works closely with other departments and agencies to protect our Nation against potential interference in our election processes. We warn the Russian Government when its behavior is unacceptable, work with our inter-agency partners to impose costs in response, and build international coalitions to actively deter malign Russian activities and share best practices. While the Department's mandate is to lead on foreign policy, we also support the efforts of the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice and, as appropriate, State and local officials to secure our elections, leveraging all necessary and available Department resources to counter Russian attempts to interfere.

Question. Has the administration developed punitive actions, including sanctions that would go into effect immediately if Russia interfered in a future election?

Answer. The Department of State has made clear to the Russian Government at the highest levels that any efforts to interfere in the 2018 midterm elections will not be tolerated and will be met with significant consequences. We are working on a whole-of-government basis to not only safeguard our electoral systems and processes, but also to prepare responses should Russia attempt to interfere again. The Department will use appropriate diplomatic, economic, and political tools to respond should there be evidence of interference.

Question. If Russia interferes in the upcoming midterms, what actions will you recommend to the President as the appropriate response?

Answer. The Department of State has made clear to the Russian Government at the highest levels that any efforts to interfere in the 2018 midterm elections will not be tolerated and will be met with severe consequences. We are working on a whole-of-government basis to not only safeguard our electoral systems and processes, but also to prepare responses should Russia attempt to interfere. I will recommend the President consider the full suite of diplomatic, economic, and political tools to respond should there be evidence of interference.

Question. How are Turkey and Russia coordinating operations in northern Syria, and how are U.S. arrangements with Turkey in northern Syria impacting Turkish-Russian cooperation?

Answer. On June 4, Secretary Pompeo and Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu considered the recommendations of the Turkey-U.S. Working Group on Syria pertaining to the future of our bilateral cooperation in Syria on issues of mutual interest, to include taking steps to ensure the security and stability in Manbij. They endorsed a Road Map to this end and underlined their mutual commitment to its implementation, reflecting agreement to closely follow developments on the ground. This agreement represents a way forward to maintain stability, sustain Defeat ISIS gains, and facilitate ongoing Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS operations in northern Syria.

Turkey continues to engage Russia and other actors in Syria through diplomatic and military channels and continues to update us on these discussions. Turkey shares our goals of a unified, stable Syria, and supports the United Nations-led Geneva process. Turkey also permits Coalition aircraft to use Turkish bases and hosts over 3 million Syrian refugees. We are clear with Turkey about our concerns regarding Russian actions and influence in the region.

Question. What is the future of the U.S. relationship with the Syrian Kurdish forces that have supported U.S. operations against the Islamic State? Will the U.S. phase out support for Syrian Kurdish forces?

Answer. The United States is committed to the defeat of ISIS in Syria and to ensuring that it cannot return to liberated areas. Since 2015, the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS has worked with the Syrian Democratic Forces to defeat ISIS. This cooperation has facilitated the liberation of more than 3.2 million people and over 95 percent of the terrain that ISIS held at its height in Syria in the summer of 2014. The Syrian Democratic Forces is a multi-ethnic and multi-sectarian alliance comprising Syrian Kurds, Arabs, and Turkmen of various faiths united in their desire and motivation to rid Syria of ISIS.

While ISIS has lost nearly all the territory it once controlled, ISIS retains a small presence in eastern Syria. We will continue our partnership with the Syrian Democratic Forces to complete the military defeat of ISIS, stabilize liberated territory, set the conditions conducive to voluntary returns of displaced Syrians, and ensure ISIS does not return as an insurgency. We will also work to ensure that all the people of northeast Syria have an appropriate say in defining the future of Syria pursuant to the political process set forth in the U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254.

Question. What role will the Syrian Kurds play in governing the areas of northern Syria where they have significant representation? How will the United States facilitate that governance role?

Answer. The United States will continue to support the inclusion of all Syrians in the political process set forth in U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254. This in-

cludes Syrian Kurds. State and USAID stabilization assistance in northern Syria includes support for the development of local governance entities that are representative, civilian-led, transparent, and legitimate in the eyes of the communities they serve.

Question. Does the administration plan to restart foreign assistance to USAID projects in the West Bank and Gaza?

Answer. No decision has yet been reached on U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, which is under review.

Question. Have you established the conditions under which foreign assistance would be resumed? What are those conditions? Who is in charge of the policy process and when will it be completed?

Answer. No decision has yet been reached on U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, which is under review. The administration routinely conducts reviews of our foreign assistance in order to ensure it is meeting our national security interests, achieving our policy objectives, and providing value to U.S. taxpayers. The Department of State will brief Congress on the conclusions of the review, once decisions are reached.

Question. For over a year, the State Department has not had a Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI persons. Will you appoint a Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI persons, and, if so, when?

Answer. Consistent with the administration's prior commitment, I intend to retain the position of Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons. The Department is working to fill the position.

CONCLUSION OF HEARINGS

Well done, Mr. Secretary. Thank you for your time and your patience and your candid answers.

The subcommittee stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

[Whereupon, at 3:58 p.m., Wednesday, June 27, the hearings were concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]